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the hazards of inheritance account sufficiently for the meaningless grouping of neighbours.

The names of the villages on either side of the river Talung are accounted for by the following oft-repeated etymological myth:

'On any clear day there is visible from Lingthem a large gendarme of black rock rising from the mountain Siniolchi, or, as it is called in Lepcha, Sanyol-koong. On that gendarme there lived once upon a time a devil called Lassoo-fo *moong* (the Lassoo bird devil). This devil was a man-eater; he used to capture people all through the neighbourhood and take them away to Tibet where he would kill and eat them. Therefore the Gods Kansi *thing* (lord), Kom-yo *thing* and Saktsum *thing* consulted together as to how they could kill this demon. They tried to find a man who was capable, but they could not do so. They then went to the caterpillar *pi-sik-bu* who gnaws trees so that they become hollow and fall down, and they told him to go and cut down the tree in that place.[3] The caterpillar agreed and hollowed the tree so that it fell down, after which the demon had no place to live and went wandering about. Then the three gods sent for Rum-nam (a mythological hero) to kill the demon, and wherever the demon went Rum-nam followed.

'The demon went down the Talung valley and came to Sakyong (so called because Tag-kyong-ka was killed there), Pantoong, Thong-to, Lavén, Tangvoong, Lungdeum (where he killed children), A-dong, Ling-them (*tem-la tem-la taa*: he ate each in turn): the village opposite is called Liklyang, the place of crying, because people cried out from there.[4] Rum-nam chased him and eventually overtook him at Lasso-tsong-nyong, in the Teesta valley to the west, and there killed him and scattered his flesh over the land. From this scattered flesh arose leeches and mosquitoes, and the small predatory bird *kar-hu-fo*. His bones turned into stone, and at the place where he was slain there is a huge stone which can be seen to this day.'

Except for questions of the size of the population and the fertility of the land and some minor details of internal administration,

[3] There is a verbal confusion here between the various meanings of the word *koong*—(1) mountain peak, and (2) tree, worked wood, and finally house-pillar. There are obviously no trees on the gendarme which is well above the snow level. However I heard this story repeated several times in identical terms.

[4] All the other village names have etymological derivations from the same legend, but it seems unnecessary to give them all.

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there is not considered to be any sort of difference in customs or character between the various villages of Zongu, with a single exception. This exception is the village of Pantoong, on the far side of the Talung valley and the nearest settlement of all to the foot of Kinchenjunga; this village was until a generation ago the home of a group of serpent-eaters. These serpent-eaters all belonged to one *ptso* or patrilineal group, the Salong *ptso*. This *ptso*, though dying out, is not yet extinct, but its living representatives no longer eat snakes. Old Lepchas of Zongu have however seen these people eat the snakes; they would stone the reptile, cut off its head, and devour the body. The origin of this habit is the following story:

'One day the ancestor of the *ptso* was going through the forest when he came on what he thought was a dead bear; but really this bear was an incarnation of Pong *rum*, the king of all animals and the patron God of hunters, who was at the moment taking a rest outside his incarnation's body. The ancestor cut up the animal and ate part of it; whereupon Pong *rum* appeared to him and said "You have eaten part of my body; henceforward you and your children must serve me and worship me and make offerings to me. Henceforward also you and your children may eat all animals, even snakes, with impunity." This is the reason why the people of Pantoong could eat and enjoy snakes, whereas the rest of us would die if we ate them.'

When I was studying the language in Kalimpong, my teacher, a missionised Lepcha, told me that the story of eating snakes was a cruel libel spread about the Lepchas by the Nepali; there was not, he insisted, an atom of truth in it, and he obviously felt that it was deeply insulting and even shameful. For the Lepchas of Zongu however the story was without unpleasant affect; it is frequently repeated as a curious and amusing anecdote, and a certain respect is felt for those people who can boast of actually having seen snakes eaten. It seems improbable that these Lepchas would feel any repulsion to eating serpents if they thought they could do so with impunity; their disgust reactions are very limited; they will eat dead domestic animals and even carrion found in the forest; and they prefer their meat to be as high as possible, provided it is not maggoty. Except during the training of the Mun priests there are no food prohibitions of any sort, except the ban on horse and dog flesh ('He who could eat the flesh of

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feckless or unlucky who have not the ground to use the help which is their due are given grain for their labour. Only with cardamum, which is a money-producing, and not a food-producing crop, is help paid for with money. The care of orphans, cripples, idiots and other helpless people in exchange for the labour they can give cannot be considered as exploitation.

Although riches and prosperity are so desirable they are fraught with supernatural dangers; there is a devil called Ginoo *moong* which attacks the over-prosperous; it is in a way Nemesis, and in a way the incarnation of other people's envious thoughts. The origin of Ginoo *moong* is told in the following story:

'Once upon a time there was a family called Ginoo, which consisted of seven brothers and one sister. The seven brothers had a house in Lingthem up above the monastery; they had seven wives and seven sons and seven daughters and seven sons-in-law and seven daughters-in-law; they were so numerous that they could do all the field-work between here and Mangan in one day and would eat between them a whole goat at one meal. However these people had no oxen, no jewels, and no permanent cultivation.[3] When they went out to work two people had to stop at home to do the cooking and one to gather leaves for the fire. Their sister lived lower in the valley; she was a widow and had a single daughter, but she had sixty heads of oxen and many necklaces and jewels, so heavy that they weighed six seers. This woman was a Mun; she lived in the house, while her daughter slept in a shed.

'Now the brothers grumbled and spoke among themselves saying "We have nothing, no jewels and no cattle, and we could use them; our sister is a widow and excessively rich; if we were to kill her we should possess all her wealth." So they made a plan and they went up to her house at dead of night and cut her to pieces with their knives and crept back unobserved. When this occurred the daughter who was sleeping in the shed woke up with a start, thinking "What is the matter with my mother?" And she was frightened and ran to her mother's house. When she arrived there she found the verandah spattered with blood, and inside her mother sat trembling. The brothers had hacked her body to pieces but she was a very powerful Mun and all the pieces had joined together. The mother said to her daughter "Why have you come? Your maternal uncles have killed me. Now you are here go and gather

[3] It is interesting to note the manner in which these very recent signs of wealth have been incorporated into the old story.

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he tips of the *shang-no* tree, but of that tree only." The daughter vent and gathered the twigs and put them into her mother's lap. Then the mother said "If I can cover the sun with these twigs I an go all over the world. Watch what I do." Then she went out n to the verandah and threw up the twigs, so that the sun was overed and she would be able to go all over the world. Then he returned to the house and said to her daughter "You had better o soon, for your maternal uncles will be coming to look for my ody. They will take away three bags of jewels and only leave ou three tiny necklaces; but wear those and look after them. hey will take all the cattle and only leave you one baby calf; ook after that. Do not be sad, for in seven days a man will come nd marry you, and your children will be *Jem-mi* (that is Mandal) f this place. Now go away." The daughter did as she was told.

'When morning broke the brothers came to fetch the corpse, ut they could see nothing; only there was a trail of blood leading o a lake situated above a big tree, and behind that a cliff with a oor in it. The mother entered that cliff and there she *munthen* performed the religious contemplation of the Mun) for seven ays.

'Meanwhile the brothers had divided the property just as had een prophesied; and the girl stayed with her calf and her three mall necklaces in the shed; and in seven days a hunter arrived nd lived with her and married her. This hunter was named Tsel-elim, and from him the Tsel-telim *ptso* sprang.[4]

'For seven days the mother *munthen* and at last she summoned he devils from their home; she vowed vengeance on all who had reat wealth or many children and she sent out the devils. These evils are called Ginoo *moong pan-di* ('Queen devil Ginoo') after he name of the murderers, and Lingthem *anyou* ('Lady Lingthem') fter the place of the murder.

'Within one year all the huge family had died and the door of heir house was closed. Lower down in the valley was another amily which had ten married sons and ten married daughters. hese too Ginoo *moong* attacked and killed, all except two women alled Safi and Sakyon who were weeding the distant fields. But s they were weeding they heard a voice saying "I want Safi." 'I want Sakyon." The next morning when they woke up in the ield house they both had elephantiasis and quickly died.

[4] See Chapter Five, p. 127. Serving is the last survivor of this *ptso* in the eighbourhood.

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'From that time Ginoo *moong pandi* and Linthem *anyou* destroy all those who are too prosperous or have too many children. That is the reason why you should never remark on a person's prosperity; for if Ginoo *moong* hears you they will lose everything.'

Ginoo *moong* still claims victims today. One of the latest was the wife of Ongden, one of the richest members of the community, unique in having six healthy sons. She was always grumbling, saying how poor she was and how little ground they had been able to sow; to which the neighbours would reply 'How greedy you are; you are really very prosperous.' Ginoo *moong* heard this talk, and so she died, while still young. It is also perhaps the fear of Ginoo *moong* which makes Lepchas so reluctant to say what their property is; it was practically the only subject on which people were secretive and unwilling to talk; most of the information I obtained on the subject I got from neighbours. The majority of the households are all on nearly the same economic level; four or five are somewhat above, and three below the average.

iii

The chief crops raised by the Lepchas on the Talung side of Zongu are wet rice, dry rice, buckwheat, maize, cardamum, and different varieties of millet or eleusine. On the warmer Teesta side a certain amount of sugar cane and manioc is also raised. The wet rice is naturally exclusively cultivated on the terraced fields, which are capable of being flooded. Seven different types of wet rice are recognised—two of them being suitable for cultivation on the higher terraces, while the other five need the warmer climate of the valley. Some of the richer people grow these five varieties in rotation, as this is believed to rest the soil, the variety sown depending on individual choice; in these cases the seed is not saved, but is bought each year, generally from Gangtok. The majority however only grow one variety and save their own seed.

In Lingthem wet rice has been introduced for less than twenty years, and in other villages even more recently; some places, especially on the far side of the Talung, where the natural water is less plentiful, do not grow it yet. When the Mandal first learned about this crop he had experimental terraces made for three years; it was then gradually adopted by the other villagers, as they became convinced of the superior yield of this crop, and the amount of terraced ground is increased annually. Almost every household

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Mun to which he was entitled. No neighbouring village is renowned for sodomy which is usually called by the periphrasis *mon-bo taa tyoul*—the effect of eating uncastrated boar. It is a typically Lepcha attitude to view such unethical acts as being out of the control of the aggressor; nobody would willingly or knowingly eat uncastrated pig, and therefore a sodomite who brings, or risks bringing a 'year of disaster' on the community is not responsible for his acts. No disgust is shown for Takneum *youmi*: but people avoid sleeping near him when he is drunk. The Lepchas state specifically that this *tamtoom* does not apply to other races, but only to themselves; other people can eat uncastrated pig without evil results; and if they commit sodomy it is because their habits are different. The eating of wild boars does not carry any such dangers.

Pigs, together with dogs and hens, are scavengers of human excrement; indeed it is necessary to be armed with a stick to drive them away, as these animals will follow people out into the forest; and they are so aggressive that young children are always accompanied by an elder in order to keep the animals away. There is a story of the dog, the pig, and the hen quarrelling over a piece of excrement, the things they say being given in words like their cries. The dog arrives first and says 'I am going to eat this, I am going to eat this.' 'Eu you might share it, eu eu' says the pig. 'Shant, shant' barks the dog. 'All right keep it, all right keep it' clucks the hen and goes away. Afterwards people usually clean themselves with sticks or stones or grass.

Dogs are kept and loved. Hunters will have three or four; other people just one or two. The lamas say that they give away superfluous puppies; other people kill theirs. All the dogs are watch-dogs and keep away wild animals and thieves. They are always fed by their owners. They are not supposed to come into the house; in point of fact they frequently do and are turned out again.

Cats are kept to keep down mice and rats. Whenever chicken is killed the cat is given some of the *cooked* meat. In this way, it is said, they will not kill live chickens. Occasionally if hungry they will kill and eat wild birds.

Fowls are kept both for food and for their eggs. Each hen has its own nest made for it, usually on the balcony. Two or three eggs are always left in the nests and therefore the hens do not go and hide clutches away from the house. Hen's wings are never clipped nor are they enclosed, and they seem, like the other animals,

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ii

The Mun religion has a very copious validating mythology and theology. The origin of everything in the world, visible and invisible, animate and inanimate, and the changes they have undergone to bring them to their present state are told in a great number of stories of varying emotional importance. Some of the simplest of the 'origin' stories are known and told by everyone; the more important ones require *loong* before they can be told; and the most important of all, the story of creation, is only known in its full details by the Mun; one of the chief parts of their training is the learning of this story, which it is said takes seven whole days in its telling, by heart. By far the greater part of it consists of lists of pairs of supernaturals who produce the phenomena which greet our eyes today.

'Under this world is an ocean; under that ocean is another earth of twelve super-imposed stories, and under that there lives Itpomu, the Creative Mother, and her husband Débu. Their first children were Tak-seu and Tak-from, who are also called Narzong-*nyou* and Komsi*thing*. After them were born Mlum Mukyam, Sakyeun-faat-it, Saba-faat-chaum, Suk-dum-lung-ming and Chi-lel, all of whom are the present earth; Palyou and Pakyam who are gladness and joy; then Ta-lyang, Ta-kook and Ta-kok who are the blue sky without ornament: then Bru-nong, and Jil-vong, Long-mu and Tso-kor who are the forest in the sky where the stars live: then Tak-bru-num and Jit-it who are the stars. The ocean between the two worlds is called lyang-tak-yoor *oong*, tagum-lyang-shin-mu *oong* and is the home of Tal-i-nau and her husband San-go. Under the second earth are two huge copper vessels beside Itpomu, full of water, and under them is a fire; this is the reason why the earth becomes warm and wet. Then was born Panjer-roong and Pantsong-roong which is the Rungit river; then Kum-zer roong which is the origin of hot streams which cure all ills . . . then were born Num-ri and Num-ra who begat the thunder-bird, *sadher*. . . .' The greater part of the story continues in this vein.

Later on in the same story the origin of devils and the creation of the Mun spirit is recounted. This is also a very long story but is far better known than the Genesis. I only propose to give an outline of it.

'The first children of Itpomu and Débu were Komsi*thing* and Narzong-*nyou*; although they were brother and sister they

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773 539 married, and as a consequence all their children were devils and snakes and lizards. As soon as they were born their mother cast them aside without giving them milk. Finally she produced a normal child called Rilbu Shingbu whom she nursed; but when the devils saw this child getting the milk that had been denied them they were jealous and they took counsel and killed the child. Their incest was betrayed by the dog who guarded the door. When the parents were shamed and the child killed they buried the child in the black rock on the right of the Talung valley, which can be seen to this day, and thereafter in disgust they divided their property and separated. Komsi*thing* went to Tibet and he took with him all the riches and jewels and animals which the Tibetans have till this day. Narzong-*nyou* turned towards our country but she was careless and that is why our country is so poor.

'After that Komsi*thing* summoned all the devils to him and all came except Doam *moong* who is the devil of leprosy, and he counselled the devils and said to them "You are devils and you must act according to your nature; but you must take an oath that when men are born you will accept them if they give you pigs and oxen and rice and other things to eat; if you are looked after you must go away, you must obey the Mun and Padem and the sacrificer". They all took this oath except Doam *moong* who was not present and that is the reason why you can never drive him away and leprosy cannot be cured.

'But still there was no Mun; Itpomu had placed all the devils in the big plain Azum Patham; but there they had nothing to eat. So then Itpomu created the Mun spirit and sent her to feed them. When the Mun arrived at Azum Patham she said to the devils "You are older than I am and I am helpless; I will return to Itpomu.". But the devils begged her to stay, saying that if she went away they would always be hungry; if she stayed they would promise to obey her. They swore this by three great oaths; first they cut their finger nails and swore on them: then they spat on the Kashou tree and the tree withered, finally they spat in the sea and the sea dried up. Since that time the Mun must find out what sacrifices are needed and give them to the devils and the devils will always obey them.'

773 539 581 The other important story for which *loong* has to be obtained before it can be publicly repeated is the story of the *Origin of Marriage*. With its internal repetitions and lists of names it takes between two and three hours to repeat; it is always repeated

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verbatim, though not necessarily to an audience, by the Sacrificer on the second day of the marriage feast. I am giving a somewhat shortened version of it in an Appendix,[8] but there are one or two points to which I should like to draw attention. Tarbong-bo, the inventor of marriage, was Itpomu's youngest son, and was still drinking her milk when he saw, desired and tried to rape Na-ripnom; when he failed in this because he had not given the proper presents his mother sent him to his elder brother Komsi*thing* for advice and help. It will be noticed that there is no sort of transition or *rite de passage* between the child and the boy of marrying age; and that the elder brother, and not the father or paternal or maternal uncle is the natural person for a young man to turn to for help and advice. In the Mun mythology the father is never important; Débu, the husband of Itpomu, is merely a name, without personality or independent existence; it seems possible that he is a relatively modern importation. I think the same is possibly true of Tak-bo-*thing*, the grandchild of Itpomu and the child of Narzong-*nyou* (sometimes his father is Komsi*thing*, sometimes some other male supernatural); Tak-bo-*thing* is simultaneously a supernatural and the first human being and a great number of stories are told about him, chiefly to explain the origin of different human customs; but he is inextricably confused with Tashey-*thing* or Guru Rimpuché, and it seems to me probable that he is to a very great extent a Tibetan import, though probably anterior to the Lepcha's conversion to lamaism.

The chief supernaturals of the Mun are the two feminine deities Itpomu and Narzong-*nyou*. Itpomu herself is never directly invoked; it is always her creations who are sacrificed and prayed to. Narzong-*nyou* is really the chief Lepcha goddess; she is as it were the local God of Sikkim, of the Lepchas' country; she lived in the country and is responsible for its geography, flora, and, especially fauna. She is also responsible for a great number of institutions. Her elder brother and husband Komsi*thing* is also responsible for a number of habits and institutions, but he is in a way a foreigner; after he and his wife separated he took himself to Tibet. Except in the harvest rites the two of them are always mentioned in prayers and sacrifices, together with all the other supernaturals involved. The invocation usually takes hours, for all the relevant gods in all their manifestations, with their wives and their children must be mentioned by name; in private sacrifices

[8] See Appendix IV.

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all the personal and *ptso* gods of the sufferer and his family must also be included.

Apart from the two long 'scriptural' stories there are a vast number of shorter stories which are known by most of the older people and recounted on a variety of occasions. Nearly all of these the Lepchas call *lung-then*.[9] In its general meaning *lung-then* is the word applied to any traditional custom which cannot be neglected, such as the giving of feasts; applied to stories it means roughly 'tales of origin'. All *lung-then* end with the words 'And that is why today . . .' expressed or implied.

Lung-then can be divided into two groups: those dealing with supernaturals and human beings, and those dealing exclusively with animals. The most peculiar feature of the stories dealing with anthropomorphic characters is the preponderating rôle played by the genitalia, which are almost endowed with independent life; various semi-heroic humans and supernaturals possess genitalia of peculiar formation and characteristics, and the adventures of these organs together with the bodies to which they are attached are told in a number of tales. One of these stories I think worth repeating, for it is, as far as I know, unparalleled in any other mythology; it is the story of the Origin of Menstruation. The story is universally known and is repeated whenever the subject is brought up. The story would appear to be capable of two interpretations, both of them congruent with the Lepcha attitude to the similarity and difference between men and women. On the one hand it indicates an extraordinary conception of the equality of men and women, for menstruation is considered almost everywhere as one of women's greatest disabilities. But it can equally well be interpreted as male envy of women and their more conspicuous physiological functions, a deeply hidden envy which can be supported by the Lepcha belief[10] that male intervention is necessary to start the physical signs of female puberty. The story is as follows:

'Originally women had their vulvas on the top of their heads. Then the menstrual blood used to flow all over their faces and it looked so unpleasant that the gods transferred the blood to men's knees; but then, when they went hunting and travelled about the country the blood used to drip everywhere, and Narzong-*nyou* saw this and was displeased thereat. Moreover the gods still did not like the vulvas on the top of the heads, so they called for volunteers

[9] Examples of these and other Lepcha stories are given in Appendix V.

[10] See Chapter Twelve, p. 315.

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to move this unpleasant thing. First one bird was asked to undertake this task and tried, but failed; then the *nambok* bird tried for a year and failed; and then the *mong-klyok* bird (? a sort of bul-bul) said that, given a suitable reward, he would change its position. What reward? asked the gods. The bird asked that when the crops were ripe if it were to eat the grain it should not be driven away but should be let feed freely. This was agreed upon and then uttering its cry "*tabék—tabék*" (*abék* means between) it pecked and pecked and eventually moved the vulva to the forehead; there it stuck and then after a time moved slowly to the nose, the upper lip and the chin; at the chin it stuck a year, then travelled slowly down sticking five years at the navel; eventually it got to its proper place where it now is and where it is hidden. Seeing this hidden place Narzong-*nyou* who had invented menstruation so that people could tell when babies were going to be born retransferred the blood thither. As the *tamtoom* (that is the inevitable result) of this deed the Mongklyok bird has a red spot on its tail to this day as can be seen on all birds belonging to this race.'

As opposed to the stories about gods and humans, the stories about animals do not contain any sexual element at all. On the other hand excretion as a humorous situation or a sign of defiance recurs with great regularity. Outside these stories the Lepchas of Zongu do not consider 'natural functions' funny, and there is a complete absence of the cloacal jokes which form the main part of the repertoire of the puritanical missionised Lepchas. The greater number of the animal stories explain the cause of enmity between two species: they usually start by the statement that 'once upon a time the spider and the wasp (for example) set up an *ingzong* relationship,' but then one broke the pact, 'and that is why today wasps and spiders are enemies.' These stories show a great deal of observation, and many of them are extremely elaborated with a variety of comic situations.

iii

The overwhelmingly greater number of Mun ceremonies are performed for the benefit of individuals, households, or geographical groups of households. Even the prophetic possessions, described earlier, are only for the benefit of the household of the Mun and the Mun-less houses near his; and the calendrical harvest rituals, described in the next chapter, have to be performed separately for

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APPENDIX IV

THE SACRED STORY OF THE ORIGIN OF MARRIAGE

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(This is one of the two Lepcha stories which can only be recited by those people who have obtained the ceremonial qualification or *loong*. The other story is the long Mun genesis (see Chapter Eight, p. 223) of which the greater part consists of a long catalogue of names.

The sacred story of the origin of marriage has to be repeated in its entirety by the officiant at each marriage. It takes between two and three hours to rehearse, owing to the innumerable internal repetitions and culminations which I have indicated in brackets. Nearly every paragraph is repeated twice, and some many times more.)

When Itpomu had completed creation there were no husbands and wives. The last person she bore was a son called Tarbong-bo whom she nursed. When the child grew big enough to work he told his mother that he would like to travel and see the world. His mother said "No, you are too young" but he insisted, and so she cooked some rice for him and put it into his knapsack. So the next morning he travelled by the road called Parhi Pageun and came to the top of Paki Chu; from there he went down to Palyang Chu, which is a mountain above Sakhyong and can be seen on a clear day. From there he saw the *palit samper koong* tree covered with fruits, and *pedong, taryong athyak kanyoong* and many other birds eating the fruit. When he saw that he sat down and ate his rice; then he returned home in the evening and climbed on to his mother's lap and sucked her milk. His mother then asked "What did you see?" He told her what he had seen (*verbal repetition*). Then his mother said "If you are my son you must go and get *yongming yongsong* (which is a kind of bamboo) and the thread *komok ki* (to make traps)." That night he slept at home and the next day he went and got what his mother had said, cutting down the bamboos and returned home. The day after that he went back to Palyang Chu and made snares with the threads and set them on the trees and returned and climbed on his mother's lap and told her what he had done. His mother told him that he must go back early in the morning. He did so and found all the different sorts of birds caught in the snares, so many that they made a full load. When he had collected the birds he reset the snares and then went home and said to his mother "Mother, if these birds are good to eat, eat them and take them as my repayment for your milk: if they are no good, throw them away." Itpomu replied "They are good to eat: and I accept them as a recompense for my milk."

The next morning Tarbong returned to the tree, but instead of birds in the traps he found in every trap a penis, exactly like real life, made out of wood.

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539 581 703 Tarbong was angry at this, threw the penises away, and reset the traps. Then he went home and climbed on to his mother's lap and said " Mother, today I have nothing to bring you ; there were no birds in the traps, just penises of wood." At this his mother said " If you are my son, you will go and hide yourself so carefully that even the birds cannot see you, and then in your hiding place you can stay and see who does this thing." The next morning he returned and found the snares again full of penises ; he threw them away, and reset the snares and then hid himself so well that even the birds could not see him. After a time a beautiful girl dressed in *kaji lasong* (nettle cloth) arrived and started to make wooden penises. She was very beautiful ; her name was Na Rip Nom, and her mother was Ta Im Ta Mit. Tarbong was angry when he saw her doing this and he climbed up the tree to try to stop her, and they struggled and rolled hither and thither ; and then he got excited and tried to rape her, but he could not do so and so they separated and he went home and climbed on his mother's lap and said to her " Mother, I have come home without any birds." " What did you see, my son ? " " I found Naripnom making penises of wood, and I tried to copulate with her, but I could not. So I return empty-handed. She is very beautiful." Then Itpomu said " If you want to possess that girl you had better go to your elder brother Komsi*thing* who lives at Rungzing Patham."

So Tarbong went to Komsi*thing*, and when he saw his younger brother he asked him why he had come. So Tarbong told him (*recapitulation*) : " This girl was putting penises in my traps, and I wanted to possess her but could not, and my mother advised me to come to you." Then Komsi-*thing* said " How can you expect to possess the girl unless you give the marriage price *nyomsa afaar* and make a sacrifice with *chi* and butter *sakyou tsok rum-faat ?* Do you love this girl ? " " Very much." " Then I advise you to go to your *ingzong* in Nepal and get from him the pig of the plains Malu Mayeng and buy a copper vessel." So Tarbong went to Nepal and brought back a pig and a copper vessel. When he returned Komsi*thing* said " I advise you to go to your *ingzong* in Bhutan to get the cloth *kamo*." So he went to Bhutan and returned with the cloth, and then he had the pig and the copper pot and the cloth. (*The story cumulates—The House that Jack Built.*) From his Tibetan *ingzong* he got a rug Numbo. From Mayel near Konchen he got millet. From Kanyong (Sikkim) he got an ox.

Now at this time there was no fire in the world ; it was only in the land between earth and heaven called Mashyok Matel where the demons dwelt, in the houses of the Deut *moong* who were smiths and were called Tangshyo Tangong Karvo. Now when Komsi*thing* told Tarbong to go there to fetch fire to cook the millet he was frightened and said he would not go among the devils for then they would eat him. So Komsi*thing* called on all human beings and animals and birds and insects to volunteer to go and fetch the fire, promising rewards of gold and jewels and rich cloths. When this offer was made the bird Kahryok Fo smiled and said " I will go for a reward." And the bird flew there and found the smith's house empty as all the people were out working elsewhere, so it took a brand in its beak from the fireplace and flew back. On its way back it came to the Kashou tree (chestnut) ; there it felt hungry, and laid the brand on a branch while it looked for fruit. But the wind blew and the flames sprang up and a great fire raged over the world, and the bird was caught

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in it; that is the reason why till this day it has short feathers and a black face. It was ashamed and did not return to Komsi*thing*.

Komsi*thing* waited for the bird but it did not come and he saw the fire, so he asked for another volunteer; and this time an insect (*? wasp or firefly—like a grasshopper, but flies*) *takñyom nomyor nyom* volunteered to go for a reward. When it got to the smith's house all the Deut *moong* were away, so it lay on its back by the fireplace and looked at the house upside down; and the whole house turned upside down. When the Deut *moong* returned from the west it found its house upside down and searched and found the insect who had done it lying on its back; he tried to catch it, but it wriggled and flew away. The Deut *moong* said "Why have you upset my house in this way? I shall kill you for it." The insect said "If you do kill me, your house will never get straight again." "Please don't do that. What have you come for?" "Komsi*thing* has sent me to fetch fire." "I will give you some, if you promise to straighten my house; but you cannot carry fire in your mouth." "Yes, I can." They argued, and finally the insect took a brand in its mouth, and the Deut *moong* put a flint and tinder up its backside. On his return the insect rested by the Mong Ing Pong tree, and put down the brand at the foot of the tree; but the wind came and blew it to a blaze and the insect got therefrom a black face. But it flew back to Komsi*thing* and gave him the flint and tinder from his backside, since he had lost the brand; and he told him all that the Deut *moong* had told him, and showed him how to make a fire with dry grass. So they made a fire and cooked the millet in the copper vessel, but, when the millet was cooked they found they had no yeast.

The only person who possessed yeast was an old woman who lived in the plains called Numli-*nyou*; so Komsi*thing* asked who would volunteer to go and fetch it, promising great rewards. The insect *takder thing* said it would go and it went to live with the old woman for some days and helped her. One day she started to prepare *chi*, and cooked the millet; but when it came to the moment of putting in the yeast she covered *takder* with a close woven basket *tangar*. But when *takder* was inside he cried "Grandmother, in this basket I can see everything which is going on in the world; if you want to hide something from me you should cover me with a *tangjang* (this is a loose woven basket)." The old woman believed what he said and covered him with a *tangjang* and so he could see all that she was doing, though he pretended he could not. He saw her take a pot from the back of her neck, and pour something from it into her hands. Then she rubbed her hands together and scattered the dust over the cooked millet; she replaced the pot; and put the millet in the basket. Then *takder* cried "Grandmother, please take me out of this basket; I am suffocating." So Numli-*nyou* removed the basket.

After two days the lovely smell of ferment rose from the millet, and then the old woman put it in an earthen pot and covered the pot well up, and stood it over the fire. *Takder* tried to get the pot with yeast in it, but he could not; at last he hit on a plan. He told Numli-*nyou* he could see a louse in her hair and asked her to let him remove it: she agreed so he jumped on her shoulders and started delousing her. While this operation was going on Numli-*nyou* became sleepy; and then *takder* removed the pot very very slowly and very very quietly and ran away. When he was half-way away she woke up and missed *takder*. Then she discovered the theft and saw him running away and shouted after him

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"I thought you were my grandson, but I see you are nothing but a thief; you have stolen my yeast and will give it to everybody all over the world. So I set my curse on it; may it make everybody who drinks it drunk and quarrelsome." And so it has been; when people get drunk they quarrel.

When *takder* returned to Komsi*thing* with the yeast, Komsi*thing* asked him if he knew how to make *chi*: *takder* said he did (*complete recapitulation*) and they followed his instructions; but since they had no earthenware pots to put the fermented *chi* in they put it in baskets, well covered with leaves. Then Komsi*thing* asked *Taknyom* what reward he desired for bringing the fire: *Taknyom* replied "Gold and jewels and clothes are no use to an animal; what I want is to be given the plants *mangder* and *sanghlo* which grow in the valley." (*He was given these.*) Similarly *Takder* (*complete recapitulation*) was granted the leavings at the bottom of the spoons and plates and patyoot.

When the *chi* was ready all were afraid to be the first to drink. Eventually the snake Putsóng *beu* was summoned and drank it; when it had drunk it dashed away like lightning. Seeing this all the gods and men were frightened to drink. After that the snake Pamol *beu* was summoned; but when it had drunk it ran about biting people and animals so that they all died. (When Sangé *rum* saw that the snake would kill everybody if it was allowed to behave so he set a lock on its mouth; and nowadays it bites very few people.) Next the snake Poblyok *beu* was summoned: when it had drunk it fell senseless. Komsi*thing* gave that snake the ferns to live in; it is harmless. After this they thought that the *chi* was harmless; but then they found they had no butter for *Sakyou faat*. So Komsi*thing* went to Itpomu and asked for butter so that they could *Sakyou faat* for the marriage of Tarbong and Naripmu. He said to his mother "We have the *chi*, but no butter." Itpomu said "Get a bamboo *yongtong*," and when he had got it she filled it with the butter which she had from her cows. Then on her instructions nine containers (*takner*) of *chi* were prepared, and their edges were smeared with butter.

Now all the gods and men gathered for the marriage of Tarbong and Naripnom. Everything was prepared in due order; all the gifts were placed on one side, and then Komsi*thing rum faat* with *chi* and *sakyou*. This is the reason why today when a marriage is celebrated all the gods are worshipped, and these gifts are given. Only when Tarbong and Naripmu were husband and wife was he able to possess her. This is the reason why to-day Lepchas still give the same gifts; this is BRI-IT, the origin of marriage.

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APPENDIX V

LEPCHA STORIES

(As has been stated in Chapter Ten, the Lepchas' favourite amusement is to tell and listen to stories, of which they have a very large repertoire. A collection of these stories would doubltess fill many volumes; I was told a very considerable number. I am giving here four typical stories of the type told by Lepchas for entertainment. I have abbreviated them all by cutting out the internal repetitions.)

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(a) THE STORY OF LYANG MOK MOONG

A frightening story about devils.

Once there were two boys who were great friends; one lived at Sabeun and the other at Karhyong (places very near Lingthem). They used to set traps for birds on a *gehr* tree on the far side of Sungzoom mountain. The boy from Karhyong used to come to Sabeun and they would climb the mountain together; when they had cleared the traps they would take their catch down with them and divide it at Sabeun.

Now one day the boy from Sabeun suggested to his friend that, instead of his making the journey to Sabeun on the day after the morrow, they should both go separately and directly to the tree and meet there; the boy from Karhyong agreed. But when the boy from Sabeun arrived at the tree he saw no trace of his friend and no footprints; this was because a devil had killed him and eaten him just by the place where the elder Mrs. Lumba's field-house now stands. Since his friend was not there the boy from Sabeun started emptying the traps; in the middle of this he thought he saw his friend coming towards him; but in truth it was the devil in disguise. The disguised devil said: "I tried to catch you up, but I could not, and you have reached here first." Then, as he saw the boy from Sabeun taking the birds out of the trap the devil asked him "How on earth did you climb the tree?" and then made an attempt itself to climb up by standing on its hands and putting its feet high up on the trunk. Of course it could not climb in this way.

Then the devil took out of the front of its dress the head of the boy from Karhyong all dripping with blood, and it said to the boy from Sabeun: "Do you like eating *ka-sok* root?" and with that started gnawing at the head. Now when he did this the boy from Sabeun realised he was faced with a devil and was very frightened; he thought to himself if I come down from the tree the devil will eat me too. So he made a plan and gathered together all the bird-traps on the tree and made three bundles of them, one big, one medium

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539 and one tiny. First of all he threw the big bundle a little way away; the devil thought it was a man and ran to attack it. Then he threw the medium bundle farther away, and the devil ran after that; then he threw the tiny one a very long way away and the devil ran after *that* one; and when the devil was as far away as possible the boy climbed down the tree and ran quickly home to his house (it was the house of one of Serving's forefathers) and there he told what had happened to him (*complete repeat*) and then died.

It is on account of this that old people used to say that friends should not make appointments in distant places, for instead of one of the friends a devil will come. But nowadays it is not so dangerous, for more people live in the neighbourhood, and the lamas with their books have controlled the devils.

. . . . . .

Tafoor, who told this story, added: "Whether this story is true or not the following story is certainly true. The 'big mother' of Ashyok *youmi* and Gongyop's father Sankip were lovers and used to meet together in the field-house, where at some seasons of the year the woman used to live. Now one day she made an appointment with her lover for the evening and in expectation of his coming cooked a meal of manioc and pumpkin. But Sankip did not arrive, and when it got dark she thought she saw her husband sitting on the bamboo ends which projected from the side of the field-house like a verandah. She thought her husband had come instead of her lover, so she decided to make the best of it and built up a big fire and called to her husband to come in. But when the flames of the fire lept up and cast a clear light the figure turned its head aside so that its face could not be seen; the woman realised at once that it was a devil. So she fetched a bow and arrows and a knife and placed them beside her, and all night she kept a big fire burning and sat watching. When the first cock crowed at Sanklong the figure disappeared. As soon as it was light enough the woman went to look for footprints, and found the prints of feet *without any toes*. After this horrible experience she became a Mun."

(*b*) THE STORY OF MELOAN MOONG

A comic story about devils.

(This story was told by Chala Mandal with great vivacity. He imitated the curious falsetto broken speech which indicates devil talk and at the climax imitated all Mother devil's actions in pantomime.)

A very long time ago when there were no lamaist books and only very few people living here in Lingthem there were two families who had their houses just below my (i.e. the Mandal's) house, where there are rice-terraces today. Nearby is a white cliff with a hole in it and inside that hole lived a family of devils called Meloan; the family consisted of a mother and father and two children.

Now one day the members of the households all went out to work in the

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fields, but they left behind a boy called Pun-sho-hang to look after his baby brother. While they were all alone mother Meloan *moong* came and captured Pun-sho-hang and took him home to kill him and eat him; she locked him up with her children in the hole in the cliff and then she went away to work. The boy was very frightened and started to cry and said: "How miserable I am! the devils are going to kill and to eat me!" When he cried the tears ran down his face; but the devil children had never seen tears and they were very curious and they came and licked up his tears. Pun-sho-hang was very angry at this and beat the devil children with his knife, chasing them into every corner of the cave.

In the morning—for devils work by night—mother and father Meloan devil came back bringing with them charcoal and *pasom* fruit (an inedible nut) as rice, with earthworms for a relish. All the devils ate this fare, but Punshohang threw his away. At this the mother devil said in her whining voice "Pun-sho-hang-ne mi-fyol-ne ma-cha-ne-pa . . .? etc." (*This is devil language* "Pun-sho-hangy-wangy doesn't eaty-peaty charcoal-woaly . . . etc.") The next evening the same thing occurred. (*Complete repeat with lots of devil dialogue.*)

Then after dinner the grown-up devils went out again and locked up Punshohang with the devil children and he cried again and they licked his tears (*complete repeat*) and Punshohang hit the devil children with his knife and chased them all over the place, so that they were very sore. Then he felt sleepy. so he laid down to rest, using the scabbard of his knife, which he held in his hand, as a pillow. When he was drowsy the devil children came up to him and shook him and said in shrill devil voices: "Pun-sho-hang-ne ta ha!" and they pointed out to him the place where the door-key was; for they thought he would beat them a lot, and so that they would be happier if he went away. When Punshohang opened his eyes he saw the key; he was very glad and opened the door and started to run away home.

But before he had got home mother Meloan returned and saw the door open and started to pursue him by following his footprints. Punshohang saw her coming after him; but he found a pit which had been dug to look for manioc root, so he hid in that, and pulled leaves and grass over him, so that the pit would not show. When the mother devil saw that the footprints had stopped she hunted all round but could find no trace; so she sat down on the edge of the pit to consult her oracle. She undid her sash and bared her parts; the hair hung right over her vulva. She looked fixedly at it and then made the invocation "Reshing tam-et tam tam" (*this is magic*) at which the long pubic hair erected at once and then pointed straight down to show that the boy was underground. Punshohang was in the pit looking up at her. But this seemed nonsensical to the mother devil so she put a number of other questions to her bush (*all given in full*) but each time it pointed straight down. She kept on questioning it, getting angrier and angrier, till in the end she cried "My bush is telling me lies!" And with that she pulled it out with the skin and returned home.

Then Punshohang crept out of the pit and returned to his home; he had been lost for two days and two nights and everybody had been searching for him. When he returned home he stank horribly; so they washed him all over with strained *chi*. Then his parents asked him where he had been? He

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539 told them the whole story (*almost complete repeat*) and when he had finished talking he fell down dead.

(*Note*: this story takes about an hour to tell: the devil's home-life and conversation, and especially the mother devil with her oracle are almost hysterically funny, and the jokes are repeated and repeated with only slight variations. The story is only slightly sinister, because, since the advent of the lamas and their books, Meloan devils no longer live near Lingthem. It is said however that a man at Tangvoong (a village about ten miles away) was killed and eaten by these devils; all that was found of him was his belt and his bones.)

(*c*) A LEGEND OF THE KINGS OF TIBET AND SIKKIM

Commencement only.

Once upon a time there was a king called Agyap Patso Numgé; he was a human being, but his sister Queen Ong-Bala was a devil. She lived in a separate palace of her own, and all the common people served the pair of them. Queen Ong-Bala used to sit on a high throne, but her vulva lay on the ground at her feet. She used to make all the men who came to serve her copulate with her; but that could not satisfy her. And then she had horses to copulate with her; but she was still unsatisfied.

At that time there was living in the village of Salim (a village on the far side of the river Talung, opposite Zongu) a man called Lablo Aring, whose penis was so enormous that he coiled it eight times round his waist, and still had enough left over at the end to gratify an ordinary woman. Queen Ong-Bala heard of him and sent two ambassadors to fetch him. They said "Our Queen has sent us to fetch you," and so he went with them. When he arrived at the palace the Queen was seated on her throne; she made Lablo sit down on the ground at her feet and had him fed with *chi* and rice and meat, and he drank eight *patyoot* of *chi* and ate eight seers of meat and a great heap of rice. Then the Queen spoke to him saying "Kam-dak nam ryou? Ka-tsong nam ryou?" (This means: "Is the millet harvest good? Is the maize harvest good?" and is a *tang-bor* referring to the male genitals.) Lablo replied "A-nyou, tuzi; nam ryu-am." (Thank you, lady; the harvest is quite good.) "If that is so," said the Queen, "let us sleep together." Lablo assented and undid one coil of his penis. "I thought you said the harvest was good!" the Queen exclaimed peevishly. "Is that all you can do?" Then he undid the second coil (*repeating repeats*). . . . When the seventh coil was undone the Queen exclaimed "Now I know the harvest was indeed good! Please stop." But Lablo refused; he undid and inserted the eighth coil and this hurt so much that the Queen cried out "Now at last I am satisfied! I want no servants and I want no horses!" When all was finished the Queen gave Lablo another good meal (*the menu given*) and sent him home to Salim; and to this day the men of Salim have big penises.

Now the Queen was made pregnant by this and eventually bore twin sons; the elder, called Tsayong, had only one eye in the centre of his forehead. The younger was named Dé-ong.

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When these sons were grown big the Queen made a plan to kill her brother the King. He was at the hot springs for his health, and she sent thither two supposed Tibetan doctors to advise him. But when the doctors were pretending to feel his pulse they really severed his arteries. As soon as the King realised what had happened he held the severed arteries in his hand and sent for his minister Yookshing Takshé and told him to go and revenge him and kill the Queen. Yookshing Takshé made his plan; he dressed in plain clothes without any weapons—not even a knife; and he presented himself at the Queen's palace with simply a scarf and a rupee in his hand. First of all the sentries refused to let him enter though he insisted that he must present the scarf and the coin to the Queen personally; but when they saw how harmless he was they let him pass. It was midday at the time and the Queen was sleeping; so the minister stuffed the scarf down her throat and thereby suffocated her; at the same moment the King let go the arteries he was holding and expired.

Yookshing Takshé returned to the King's palace and killed the two Tibetan doctors by catching them by their heels and throwing them in the river—for he was a very strong man. They did not burn the body of the King till they saw the smoke rising from the Queen's pyre. . . .

(This is the first instalment of one of the long stories which take a week to relate every evening after sunset. The continuation deals with the King's young son, whom the Queen's sons try to kill; he is rescued by the minister after a number of peripetiae. When this son grows up he lives as a farmer in the jungle until one day four people arrive and recognise him as king. His palace of Phyong Di is built with the help of the people of Mayel. The King of Sikkim refuses to recognise the prophecy of his minister Lapchen Chimbu that the Guskhas are going to invade the country; Lapchen Chimbu leaves, the Gurkhas invade; the King is with difficulty smuggled into Tibet, and a new royal line of Sikkim is started by the chief general.)

(*d*) FABLES—LUNGTHEN

(*Such as are told at weeding parties*)

Why the Leopard and Monkey are enemies.

Once upon a time a monkey and a stork (?) set up a pact of friendship. After they had done so they sat on different branches of a big tree, under which was deep mud, and competed as to who had the loudest voice. The monkey told the stork to shout first, but it refused so the monkey started. It shouted so loudly that it shook the tree, but the stork was not disturbed. Then the stork shouted fairly softly. "That's nothing," the monkey said. Then it shouted so loudly that the monkey fell off the tree and into the mud up to its neck and the stork flew away.

"Oh dear, I'll die; I'll starve to death," the monkey cried to itself. And it was almost starving when an elephant arrived. To it the monkey said "Are you not my elder brother? Please pull me out of this, and then you can kill me and eat me." But the elephant took no notice and went on. Then the rhinoceros . . . and puma (*two repeats*). . . . Then the wild goat arrived,

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539 but when the monkey had made his suggestion he refused and said " Others are following; they will free you." Then grandfather tiger . . . and the cheetah . . . (*two repeats*) passed. Then the leopard came and the monkey said " Please pull me out of this, and then you can boil me and eat me." But the leopard replied " No: I must go on with the others." But after it had gone on a little way the leopard thought to itself " I could get time to take that monkey out and boil it and eat it, and still catch up with the others " So it went back to the monkey and told it it had decided to accept its offer to eat it. " Very well," said the monkey. " First of all you must dig a pit, and get firewood and cooking stones, and you must take me out and dry me before I will be ready to cook."

The leopard did as he was told and put the monkey on a stone. " Po-gi na-gu " (come here, bending bamboo) cried the monkey. " What did you say? " asked the leopard. " I was asking you if you had got the fire and stones ready," replied the monkey. When the leopard was lighting the fire in the pit the monkey cried " Po-gi na-gu " again. " What's that? " asked the leopard. " I said turn me round so that I can dry on the other side," said the monkey. The leopard did so. " Po-gi na-gu," cried the monkey a third time. " What's that? " said the leopard. " I said you must go and fetch the water to boil me in," said the monkey. But this time the bending bamboo had heard the monkey's cry and it bent down and the monkey climbed up on to it and from that safe eminence shat all over the leopard. At this the leopard was angry and said " Henceforth there will be enmity between you and me. Now I shall hunt and kill and eat you always, night and day." And that is the reason why nowadays leopards kill and eat monkeys.

The origin of eating fish.

Once upon a time there lived in the Rangit river a devil which was partly a fish and partly a woman; it had long hair and breasts and a vulva. This was a very wicked devil which was destroying all the other fish; it did not kill them properly but bit pieces out of them. So Tashey-*thing* (or Guru Rimpuché; the story is told with either protagonist) decided to kill the fish; he made a bamboo fish trap, and after hunting the devil for three days he caught it and killed it. As a punishment for what the fish had done he cut up the body when it was killed; then he dug a pit and made a fire and heated two big stones; one big stone he put on the bottom of the pit; then he put in the fish's carcase; on that he put the other hot stone and covered everything up. Some hours later he uncovered the body; but it was very hot when he took it out and some fat got on his thumb. He shook it off and then put his scalded thumb into his mouth; and from that day onwards everybody can eat the flesh of fishes.

The story of the blackbird and the crab.

Once upon a time there was a blackbird which was flying round a bush catching insects, when he saw a crab with its great big staring eyes walking by the bush. The blackbird asked the crab what it was doing, to which the crab replied that it was very hungry and was looking for food. Then the blackbird suggested that they set up a pact of friendship; the crab agreed,

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and they then made their plans to go hunting the wild boar in the forest. The crab said "You take the wide path: I'll follow you," and in that order they went into the forest; the bird uttered its cry "Tcher tchir tchet" and caught a wild boar, but all it could do was to pull out one hair. This happened three times and eventually the crab got angry and said "You can't manage this, my friend; we'd better change places; I'll take the wide path and you follow." The crab laid down on the wide path with its claws open and caught the boar by its throat; the blackbird flew up from behind, and between them they killed the boar, cut up the meat and heaped it up into a big pile. But when all was ready for cooking they found they had no fire to cook it with, so the crab told the blackbird to go and look for some. 539

The blackbird set out and on its search came to the house of the she-devil Samoo. There he asked for fire and the she-devil asked "What do you want it for?" The blackbird said "We went out hunting so we couldn't carry any fire with us." The devil then gave him a firebrand but told the blackbird it must shake it all the way back. The blackbird took it back to the crab and the two of them cooked the meat; but the devil had followed the sparks and came to try and get the food. But the blackbird flew away with its portion into the tree and the crab took his into the water. Nevertheless they were very angry and the blackbird decided that they must kill the person who was trying to steal their meat. So he flew about in the forest and at last found some raw latex and dropped it all over the devil's body so that the devil was extremely unwell for several days.

When she finally recovered the devil decided to take her revenge. She therefore sewed up her anus and went to drink up all the water from the pool where the crab lived. She had drunk so much that the crab was visible on the bottom when the blackbird flew down and pecked open her anus so that all the water fell out and the pond was refilled. The devil was thus foiled three times, and got even angrier; so she went into the forest to look for latex, and covered her anus with it and started to drink the water again. When the crab was visible the blackbird flew down again, but this time its beak was caught in the latex. The devil immediately put the bird into a cage, and tied up the crab's claws. Then she returned to her home, hung up the blackbird in the cage and kept the crab with its claws tied up.

One day the two of them were basking in the sun, and the crab was very drowsy because it could find no water. The blackbird cried to the devil "Mother! Our friend must be dying! He has a most horrible stink; just take a sniff!" The devil leant over to smell the torpid crab, which thereupon grasped the devil's neck between its claws and killed her. Then the crab opened the blackbird's cage with its pincers and they both escaped, the bird to the trees, and the crab to the water.

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193 Although fundamentally monosyllabic a great number of Lepcha words have modifying prefixes which are always used in conjunction with the word to give a different sense, so that practically the words have become bisyllables. There are no true polysyllables, though the addition of modifying prefixes and suffixes may produce polysyllables. In bisyllables the stress is usually on the second syllable.

A distinguishing feature of Lepcha is the initial a-, which is added to a great many monosyllables. The existence of this a- appears to depend entirely on euphony; it is always suppressed in compound words and often in speech. Thus *a-nyou* (lady) becomes Narzong-*nyou* (Lady Narzong—a goddess); *a-mu* (mother) becomes *ma-thim* (Big mother) and so on. Euphony is also the reason for a number of varying features in Lepcha speech; thus the plural suffix is *-song*, *-ʒong*, or *-pong* according to the sound of the word to which it is suffixed.

There is no true gender in Lepcha, though a certain number of kinship terms and words definitely implying sex (male and female mammals e.g.) have gender connotations. There is no gender distinction in the third person pronouns.

The stems of words are modified only in the case of the three singular pronouns, which have different stems for the nominative and objective cases.

Nominative	accusative	genitive	dative
(I) go	kasum	kasi	kasum
(thou) Ho	a-dom	a-do	a-dom
(he) Hu	ha-dom	ha-do	hum

In all other nouns and pronouns the genitive is indicated by the suffix *-sa*, ideas of motion by *-ka*, ideas of direction by *-rem* and ideas of action (ablative) by *-nun*. These suffixes are not added if the sense is clear otherwise.

Verbs are not modified to express the idea of number, but there are a great number of suffixes to indicate time and mood. The distinction between nouns and verbs is arbitrary; many nouns can receive verbal suffixes, and verbal nouns can be produced by the addition of *-shang* or *-lung* to the stem.

The sentence order indicates the sense to a great extent. Qualifying genitives precede the noun they qualify; indirect objects precede direct objects, and the operative verb comes at the end of the sentence. As an illustration of Lepcha syntax I am giving part of the first paragraph of the last fable in Appendix V (The story of the blackbird and the crab) with a literal translation.

193 539 *Iaba chahim-fo dyap-ka a-fi a-ʒhu lewn-long tam-bik tsaam. Otetka*
Formerly chahim-bird bush-at hither thither fly-doing insect catch. Then
o-re dyap-ka taki kat amik kleup-kleup lom-am si. Chahim-fo-nun
that-one bush-at crab one eye blinking walk-ing see. Chahim-bird-by
taki-rem vet "Ho abi shu ʒuk-am go?" Taki-nun li "Go abi
crab-to ask "Thou there what doing indeed?" Crab-by say "I there
kreedok-nun aʒom dong-am." Otet-ka chahim-fo-nun ta-hi-rem ingʒong
hunger-been food search." That-at chahim-bird-by crab-to ingzong

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thik-ba : *eunun hanni nyet ingzong thik* . *Eunun mun-dyak-shang hanni* 193
set-up-would : then they two ingzong set-up. Then meat-pursue-to they

nyet toot-mat . *Nyet-la mon-tseu-mon dyak-shang toot-mat* . 539
two advice-make. Two indeed boar- pig pursue-to advice-make.

Eunun nyet-la panjok-ka nong. Tahi-nun li " Ho are pyong-ka ding-o
Then two-indeed forest-to go. Crab-by say " Thou this path-at walk-do

eunun go-re dyak-lung di-shu." Otet-ka thung-do tahi-do dyak-lung
then I indeed follow-ing come-will." Then- at really crab-indeed following

lom pyong-ka loong-lat. Chahim-fo-nun-sa alik tcher tchir tchet liklung
road path-on travel-did. Chahim-bird-by-of cry tcher tchir tchet cry-ing

mon-tseu-mon-rum cher sen-la a-tsang kat kat-aa kup ak . *Otetka*
boar-pig-at catch but hair one only small pull-out. Then

tahi-re sak-lyak " Ta-tsong-a ho ma-keut-ne : a-long a-do pa-lo
crab-that angry " Friend-oh thou not-can-not : therefore thee after

dyak-nu pyong-ka go ding-shu."
follow-do path-on I walk-shall."

[p. 496 is blank]

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is expelled or summoned it sees the "house" which has been newly made in its honour and settles there in preference to a human habitation. Having entered it becomes entangled in the arrangement of strings and can then be taken with the offering and thrown away. Simple-minded demons can be trapped with a simple kind of *yay:* some, however, are not so silly and can only be caught in an elaborate arrangement that looks like a series of concentric spiders' webs inside several intertwined triangles. It is well known what sort of *yay* is required to catch any particular demon; and it seems that the latter never learn sense.

The three heads of the Go-sum are coloured respectively red, blue, and yellow to match the *yay* which is stuck behind the neck of each.

Gyong-bo: six. These are thin bamboo slivers with tufts of wool at the top and at intervals down their length. They represent *Tarchuk*, or prayer-flags for the living.

When these things have been arranged round the Go-sum the whole is garnished with leaves, brambles and flowers in season. A handful of assorted grain is sprinkled over it, and all is then complete. It is now taken and placed on the ground in front of the altar, after which the ceremony proceeds. The one Tafoor made for me took him the best part of one whole day; and while he was doing it he told me the following story:

THE STORY

There was once a god named Hla-Chongbu-Gadjen, whose second daughter was in the habit of stealing flowers, the property of other gods. Because of this she was expelled from heaven and sent to live in the world. In due course she was reborn in Nepal, at a place called Pe-Yu Chorten.* Little of the girl's early life is known except that she was an orphan, and was taken into the household of the Maharaja of Nepal.

* This is Tibetan and merely means "(the place of) the Tibetan Chorten." A chorten is a Buddhist tope, or stupa. It is usually in the form of a huge dome.

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539 During this time she became pregnant by one of his grooms, and in due course gave birth to a son. The same thing happened with the master of the dogs; and again with the steward in charge of the pigs. For many years she lived with her three sons and earned her living by selling eggs and chickens. She must have had an immense poultry farm, for in a short time she is said to have accumulated no less than three lakhs of rupees, or in English money twenty thousand pounds! When she had accumulated all this wealth she one day took a bullock skin and asked for an audience with the Maharaja. She laid the skin on the ground in front of him and begged him to give her a piece of land of similar size. She wanted it, she said, to build a chorten. Seeing the insignificant size of the piece of land required the Maharaja readily consented: but when the girl got back she shredded the skin and spun it into a long rope. She then arranged it on the ground in the form of a circle: it covered several acres of land, and on this she arranged to build her chorten. She started to work on her own; but finding this too arduous she bought an elephant and a donkey, which she used to carry the necessary stones to the site. When the work was only half completed she suddenly died; and was immediately transported to the home of the gods, whence she had originally come.

The chorten remained in this half-finished state for many years, when the eldest of the three sons called his brothers to him with a view to completing the work. When it was ready the three brothers offered it ceremonially to the gods; each at the same time making a personal request.

The eldest brother asked that he might reincarnate as a very great god. His request was granted, and in due course he was reborn at Budh-Gaya as the god Sangay Chomden. The second brother now made his request; he asked that instead of reincarnating in the ordinary way he might be reborn in the bud of a flower: also he wished to be the overlord of all the demons and gods inhabiting the human world. Both these requests were granted. The youngest brother asked

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that of all human beings he might be the wisest, and a great 539
and a holy lama.

When the three brothers had made their requests the elephant imagined that his turn would come. He knew that he had worked as hard as anyone, and was wondering what he could ask of the gods. To his surprise, however, the three brothers asked no boon for him, and he found that he was completely ignored. He therefore prayed that he might be reincarnated in some form which would make him the master of the eldest brother. The same thing happened to the donkey: he too was forgotten, so he quietly prayed that when he was reborn he might have control of the youngest brother.

The elephant was the first to die, and he was shortly followed by the donkey; so that as the animals had prayed so did it come to pass. The elephant reincarnated as Deut Hlajen; and in this state he later quarrelled a great deal with Sangay-Chomden, the form in which the eldest brother was reborn. One day his minister came to him in great perturbation and told him that Sangay's death had been predicted to take place in three days' time; but in order to preserve the relative seniority in the next reincarnation it was essential for Deut Hlajen to die first.

Hlajen had six children: Alcohol, Tea, Pigeon, Crow, Rat, and Tobacco, who were born in that order. Since he must now die he called his sons around him, in order to decide which amongst them was capable of carrying on his bad work; for his was an evil spirit. Alcohol spoke up at once: he could lead even great Lamas astray by inflaming their desires. When he heard this Hlajen became slightly weaker and advanced one step towards death; but he was by no means satisfied that he had found a suitable successor. Then Tea spoke: he, too, could do much harm. He could make rich men poor by causing them to buy all sorts of expensive things: the cups, saucers, pots, and so on, necessary for drinking tea; butter too was essential, and this was also expensive. Since tea-drinking quickly becomes a habit, people would soon become impoverished. When the father

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539 heard these words he became yet a little weaker; but still he was not satisfied. Now it was Pigeon's turn; he said that he could do harm by fouling the sacred bowls in monasteries. But at this the father only merely smiled, and it had no effect upon his weakness. He then asked Crow what he could do. He answered that by sitting on the top of the poles of prayer-flags, and excreting on the flags below, he could make them ineffective and thus do quite a lot of damage. This pleased the father better and he became noticeably weaker. Finally Rat spoke: "Do not you worry, father," he said; "for I will destroy people's clothing, their books and any food they leave about." But even this did not please Hlajen overmuch. All this time Tobacco was smiling quietly in the corner. "I will go and be born again as a plant," he said; "people will then smoke me. By this means I can gradually destroy the world: moreover, the foul smoke, as it rises to heaven, will be displeasing to the gods." The father was delighted with this suggestion and immediately expired, with a clear conscience and untroubled soul. He was transported straight to Langarshay (?), and in due course reincarnated as the son of the Raja of that place.

He now became very friendly with the son of one of his father's poorer subjects, and the two boys decided to study together with a very famous Lama who lived in the town. One had his lessons in the day-time and the other went at night. After they had been working for some little time the two boys decided to compare their notes. In spite of the fact that they had both studied with the same master, it was apparent that their teaching had been completely different. It appeared the Lama had taught the poor boy properly; but had so instructed the Raja's son that his facts were wrong in every detail. The Raja's son was called Gulung Turbá Nakbu, and the poor boy Gulung Tempak, these names having been given them by the Lama when they first came to him to study.

When the boys compared notes and found that nothing

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agreed they decided to visit the Lama together. When they 539
arrived he told them that Gulung Tempak had learnt everything correctly; but that the Raja's son had misunderstood him and got everything wrong, hiding the fact that he had deliberately taught him thus. He cursed him for being an ignoramus and prophesied that he would turn into an evil character.

The boy now became very troublesome, and by degrees turned into an absolute waster. He left his father's home and lived in a hut at the burning-place, where he fed on human flesh. Seeing the state to which affairs had come to pass, the god Hla Chungba Gadjin decided to take action, and accordingly he sent two minor gods to kill the Raja's son, as, quite apart from the grief he had caused his father, he was giving much trouble to the people of the town.

The two gods he sent were Tadin and Dorje Phukmu. Tadin split him in two by entering his head in the form of a thunderbolt, leaving his body by way of the anus. Dorje Phukmu did likewise, but in the reverse direction. As a result of this harsh treatment he died at once, but immediately reincarnated as Yishay Gumbu, a god with its soul divided into two portions. The smaller portion went down to the world in order again to cause trouble, and was reborn in the womb of a very old woman in the form of a *tanen*, or three-headed hermaphrodite. When the old woman saw what she had given birth to she was terrified. However, she gave the monster her breast, but was horrified to see that it was sucking blood. She decided to act at once, and snatching up a kite's feather she plunged it into the central head (which was that of a bull) of her child, which appeared to die immediately. She then rushed out with the body and carried it away to the junction of several roads. There she left it, telling it that it was a demon and must never come back to the house.

After the *tanen* had been abandoned at the road junction it consumed everything all round it, including even the stones and the demons which lived inside them. No one who

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539 passed the spot was safe: he would be eaten up at once. The monster was never satisfied, and was causing trouble all over the place. Because of this the gods decided to send down Phapay Jumpa Yung, who was to remain and control it. Immediately on reaching the earth this god assumed a form identical with the *tanen*, only very much bigger. It had no difficulty in swallowing the *tanen* whole, which it did as soon as the two met. From inside the god's stomach the *tanen* started to grumble at the harsh treatment meted out to it; and so Phapay Jumpa Yung, who was really a compassionate being, at once excreted it on to the ground. As soon as it came to itself again Phapay addressed it thus: "You have eaten up all the people of this neighbourhood, and have done a great deal of damage of every kind. If, in future, you do not obey me implicitly I shall eat you again; and the next time I do so you will remain inside my stomach. If, however, you do as you are told I will give you the control of thirty devils. In order to do this, however, you must remain for ever on the earth."

The *tanen* agreed to do what was asked of it and has remained in the world ever since. That is why, when any of the thirty devils concerned is troubling a person, it is necessary to offer a Go-sum.

* * * * *

539 With very few alterations this story could be made to read
171 like a tract; but I should be surprised to find that a missionary took any part in its invention! Its real interest, however, lies in the fact that it incorporates most of the known historical details concerning the construction of the famous Bodhnath stupa in Nepal. I was unaware of this at the time, and only came across the connection on my return from Sikkim, when I was reading through Waddell. It is of considerable psychological interest to note the difference between the oral Lepcha version of the story and that given in the printed booklet which is sold to pilgrims at the stupa; and for this reason I give below Waddell's translation in

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full. It seems to have been purged of all its coarser details; 539 ●
or were they added by the Lepchas? I think this is not 171
unlikely; and that they have also incorporated the story of the Go-sum, which receives no mention in the printed version.

* * * * *

"This stupa enshrines the spirit of the Buddhas of the ten directions, and of the Buddhas of three times (i.e., the present, past and future), and of all the Bodhisats, and it holds the Dharmakaya.

"When king Thi-Sron Detsan asked the Guru, at Samyas, to tell him the history of the *Ma-gu-ta* stupa in Nepal, made by the four sons of 'the bestower of gifts,' named 'the poor mother Pya-rdsi-ma (fowl-keeper),' then the Guru thus related (the story):—

"In a former Kalpa—time beyond conception—the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, approached the Tathagatha Akitabha and prayed for the animals immersed in the miry slough, and after saving these he went to mount Potala. There he saw hosts of unsaved animals, innumerable like unto mounds of *murwa* lees, and (seeing this) he wept. Two of his pitying tears were born into Indra's heaven as god's daughters, named respectively Kan-ma and the little Kan-ma or Kan-chun-ma. This latter having stolen in heaven some flowers, was as a punishment reborn in earth, in a low pigherd's family in Maguta in Nepal, under the name of Samvara or 'the Chief Happiness,' her mother's name being Purna. On marriage she had four sons, and her husband's early death left her with the sole care of the family. She with her family undertook the herding and rearing of geese for the wealthy, and having in this pursuit amassed much wealth, the Ma-pya-rdsi-ma (or mother fowl-keeper) decided to build a large stupa in honour of the Tathagatha. She, thereon, went to the king and begged for a site, saying she wanted only so much ground as one hide could cover. The king assented, saying '*Ja-run*,' which literally means 'do' + 'can,' i.e. 'you can do (so).' Then she, cutting a

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539 hide into thin thongs (forming a long rope), enclosed that
171 very large space which now is occupied by this chaitya. And she, with her four sons, and a servant, and an elephant and an ass, as beasts of burden, brought earth and stones, and commenced to build this chaitya by their own personal labour.

"Then the king's ministers appealed to the king to stop such an ambitious building, as they asserted its magnificence put to shame the religious buildings of the king and the nobles. But the king answered '*Ka-Sor*'—which literally means 'mouth + (has) spoken'—and so refused to interfere. (Thus is the name of the stupa—'*Ja-run K'a-sor*'—accounted for.)

"After four years, when only the base had been laid, the mother died, but her four sons continued the building till its completion. And in the receptacle was placed one Magadha measure (drona) of the relics of the Tathagatha Kasyapa. This event was celebrated by the manifestation in the sky, above the stupa, of Kasyapa himself, and the circles of celestial Buddhas and Bodhisats, and their hosts of retinue, and amongst showers of flowers the gods contributed divine music and rained perfume. Earthquakes thrice occurred, and through the glory of the assembled divinities there was no darkness for five nights.

"One of the sons then prayed, 'May I in my next re-birth be born as a great scholar (to benefit mankind),' and he was born as Thumni Sambhota (the introducer of the so-called 'Tibetan' character, and the first translator of Indian Buddhist texts into Tibetan, *circa* A.D. 650.

"The second son prayed in a similar manner, and was re-born as 'The Bodhisattva' (the abbot of the first monastery of Tibet).

"Then the elephant or *lan-po* (hearing these prayers) said, 'These two, neglecting me who contributed so much assistance, are asking all the good things for themselves, therefore let me be re-born in a form to destroy them or their work.' And he was afterwards re-born as Lan-darma (the persecutor of Lamaism).

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"The third son, hearing the elephant's request, 'prayed that he might be re-born in a form to neutralise the evil of the elephant's incarnation; and he was born as Lho-lun phel kyi dorje (the Lama who murdered Lan-darma, the Julian of Lamaism).'

"This stupa is also worshipped by the Nepalese Buddhists, viz., the Newars, the semi-aborigines of the Nepal valley, and the Murmi, a cis-Himalayan branch of Tibetan stock. The name 'Maguta'—pronounced 'Makuta'—is doubtless a contraction for *Makuta bandhana*, the pre-Buddhist 'crested chaitya,' such as existed at Buddha's death at Kusinagara, in the country of the Mallas."

* * * * *

The Go-sum is a strong and very potent cure, and is believed never to fail when correctly prescribed. It can be used to cure illness caused by no less than thirty different devils; also to counteract the effects of evil fortune, when this is "sent" by other humans through the medium of any of these same thirty demons. To ascertain when a Go-sum is necessary reference may be made to a book called *Kukdzeu*. This is a sort of Tibetan "Home doctor," and something like the medieval European books of witchcraft; a strange compound of magic and medicine. I should like, however, to make it clear that the Lepcha does not regard cures of this sort as magic. In his view this is definitely medical science. Provided the diagnosis has been correct the cure is merely a matter of carrying out the prescribed ceremony. In the same way that we are convinced that germs are killed by antiseptics, so does the sick Lepcha know that the offering of a Go-sum will cure him, provided his disease has been caused by any one of the thirty demons over which it has control. Should a patient not recover it is due not to any lack of potency in the Go-sum but to a mistaken diagnosis, a state of affairs which is, after all, not entirely unknown in the West!

I have been told that the Go-sum is unknown in Tibet

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came to a place called Sakyong Pantong, where the Mayel people disappeared into the forest. By diligent searching, however, the Lepchas discovered their tracks. They followed the signs as far as Lungzong Chachyo(?) and then completely lost them, after which they returned and settled in Jonga. 773

They used to wear clothes made from nettles and hats of plaited cane, like those once worn by the Lepchas. They cultivated rice; also pumpkins, chillies, maize, and manioc, which they used to take and sell in the market at Zikchu Thum, a place in Tibet, and somewhere between Chumbi and Lhasa. They did not wish to be recognised; and it was for this reason that they went so far to dispose of their products. But during this time the Maharaja had been forced to remove his court to Chumbi (see Chapter 3) and his servants were in the habit of going to Zikchu on market days. Being for the most part Lepchas they, of course, recognised the Mayel people. They told the Maharaja what they had seen; but since the court shortly returned to Sikkim there was no opportunity to see them again; but it is believed they no longer leave Mayel.

Myths of this sort are, of course, constantly being re-interpreted; and of this particular one there are endless variations. Here is the version given by Jiroong:

"It is three days' journey from Lingtem to Mayel, which was once visited by my great-grandfather. He was out hunting at the time and came to a place where there were many big trees and a stream. He noticed a piece of wood floating on the water. It was moving slowly along and he decided to follow it. He came eventually to a narrow path, so narrow as to be like a knife-blade, where he saw some feathers lying on the ground. They belonged to a Mayel bird, which is the mother of all migratory birds that come to Jongu. He followed this path for three more days and came eventually to a village, where there were seven big and well-built houses. This was the village of Mayel; but at the time he did not know it. He went to the first house and asked for 773 539

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773 shelter, for he was hungry and tired. There were many huge
539 pigs lying about outside the house, one of which the people killed and roasted. They also gave him *chi* and rice, which he had never before tasted. He stayed in Mayel for seven days; and when he left the people gave him all sorts of grains and vegetables, at the same time asking him to tell no one what he had seen. On the way back the pumpkins, cucumbers, and other vegetables turned into stone; but the rice was planted and has been cultivated in Lingtem ever since."

* * * * *

439 No food is exported from Jongu, the people growing merely sufficient to meet their own needs; and to this I think may partly be attributed their superior physique compared, for instance, with Lepchas in the Kalimpong and Darjeeling districts of British India.

243 Rice grown in the hills is of much better quality than that
439 grown in the plains and is in demand all over India. Kalim-
[435] pong rice, for instance, sells at the present time (July 1937) at Rs5/4 a maund (approximately eighty pounds), whereas that grown in the plains can be bought in Kalimpong for Rs3/4 a maund. The depressing result of this economic factor is that the town-dwelling Lepcha (and of course the Nepali) is forced to sell his own rice for export, while himself living on the inferior plains variety; and there is no doubt that his physique and general health suffer accordingly.

164 Tuberculosis, for instance, is spreading alarmingly in these two districts, whereas in Jongu it is at present practically unknown. From statistics given me by the Tuberculosis dispensary in Kalimpong it appears that at present the incidence of this disease is considerably less amongst Lepchas than amongst the other people; but even amongst them it is steadily gaining ground. This, as I have already pointed out, is probably not unconnected with the different living conditions of the two peoples; but a more nourishing diet, such as the people get in their own natural conditions, would undoubtedly help towards stamping out the disease.

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the annual sacrifice to Pong Rum, even though he hunts no more. To neglect this duty would be to run the risk of being haunted by the god, who might cause one to drown oneself in the river. Karma no longer hunts, but when he gave it up he forgot all about the annual ceremony. One night, however, Pong Rum came and threw stones at an orange tree outside his house. It was a misty half-moonlight night and he could not see very clearly; but he could hear the stones come whizzing through the air. He went outside, lighted some incense, and put a little butter beside it. "Forgive me," he said to the Rum; "for I will hunt no more." He then went inside and lay down, thinking the god was satisfied.

About a month after this he was sitting quietly drinking one night when his dog suddenly started to bark. He went outside to investigate, but could see nothing; it was a wild, dark night. He went indoors again, but after a little while the dog again started to bark and then whined in a most peculiar way: Karma thought that perhaps someone had hit it. He went outside again; but again there was nothing to see. He walked all round the house, and then he suddenly noticed that his dog was lying dead; there were no marks on its body. It was the Pong Rum come again. Karma now does the annual ceremony regularly, and has not since been troubled.

Here is another hunting story. Some three generations ago there was once a Mandal and his friend. The Mandal's family guardian was a male god, that of his friend a female. The Mandal was exceedingly fond of hunting, but he never had any luck, whereas the other man never came home with an empty bag. The Mandal persuaded his friend to change gods with him, as he thought this might change his luck; to this his friend agreed. They sacrificed an ox, and placed it with some *chi*, butter, and grain. Then they each took their drinking bowls, smeared some butter round the rim, and made a libation to their respective gods, saying at the same time, "May my Rum be yours and yours mine." They did

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224 this three times, very solemnly and in the form of an oath.
● 539 After this the Mandal's luck changed, but the other man never again killed an animal. This is a true story.

224 869 Before a hunter can make sacrifices to Pong Rum he must first learn how. He takes a present of *chi* and rice to some experienced hunter and asks to be instructed: but he must take care that no woman knows what he is doing. The teacher will then make an offering to the god, at the same time telling it that in future the boy will make the sacrifice himself, and that he should therefore be pleased to accept it. The young hunter now sits with his back to the teacher, who goes through the sacrificial formula phrase by phrase. He does this very slowly, so that the boy may commit the words to memory. By sitting with his back to the teacher his mind is not distracted and he is thus able to concentrate better. As soon as he can repeat the words correctly he may make the sacrifice himself; but the next time he kills an animal he will do the sacrifice in the presence of his teacher. If he makes a mistake the teacher taps him gently on the shoulder, but he makes no comment. That particular sacrifice, however, is ineffective, and the boy must come again. He does this until he is word-perfect, but need take no further presents to his teacher.

411 824 The bow is the weapon most commonly used in Jongu, both for hunting and for killing domestic cattle. It is made of bamboo and strung with toughened fibre made from the young shoots of a special kind of tree-fern. Arrows are made from the stems of the *Parong* (*Deeringia celosiodes*) and tipped with kites' feathers. The arrow-head, which is detachable and usually remains in the kill, is made from *Payung* wood (*Actinodaphne Sikkimensis*) and is smeared with aconite; but 439 177 metal arrow-heads, imported from Gangtok, are nowadays replacing the home-made wooden variety. Domestic cattle are killed with unpoisoned arrows, fired at the heart from a distance of only a yard or two. The arrow-holder is merely a length of hollow bamboo fitted with a cap, and is slung over the shoulder with a length of cane. Cane,

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own. The child gets its bone from the father's semen, and its flesh from the mother's vaginal secretions. The food eaten by the mother causes the fœtus to grow; but once the baby is completely formed inside the womb it feeds on its mother's menstrual blood, which explains why the menses cease during pregnancy. 843

It is generally believed that a girl has her first menses about one month after she copulates for the first time, even though she be only nine or ten years old. Nothing is done or said at such a time; nor on any later occasion is any kind of special clothing or bandage worn. This is the origin of menstruation: 881

In olden times menstruation was confined to men, who used to bleed from the knees. In view of their normal occupations, working in the fields, hunting, and so on, this was very inconvenient, since the blood dripped all over the place. Nazong Nyu noticed this and wondered what he could do to remedy it. 773 539 841

Now in those days the female genitalia were situated in the middle of the forehead. Nazong thought this did not look very nice and decided to change the position. He summoned some bulbuls and told them to peck out the women's parts and replant them in their chins. This they did; but after a time Nazong still did not think the general effect was very pleasing. He summoned the birds again and told them to move the parts to the women's chests; but still he was not satisfied. Finally he had them moved to the place where they now are; and seeing that they were suitably hidden beneath the women's clothing he decided that it would be more convenient if women menstruated instead of men. As a result of this arrangement the women started to bleed periodically from that very day, and the bulbul still has a blood-red spot on its tail: this it acquired when it was carrying out Nazong Nyu's orders.

One day when I was talking to Karma we were all laughing rather loudly at some remark when there was a 821 831

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

to enter the ground where the monastery staircase now is; 821
but before it actually touched the ground it appeared to jink 831
away to one side, and a large thunderbolt fell at the exact spot where Babu was sheltering, under the walnut-tree just outside Jiroong's house.

"As for me, it makes no difference if I strip off all my clothes and dance naked in public; my genitalia are completely innocuous. There is no effect if people laugh at a woman's private parts."

This is the origin of marriage among the Lepchas: 581
Itpumu was the creator of all things, of human beings and 539
natural objects, even of Kinchinjunga. After having many 773
children she at last gave birth to Tarbong Bo, the youngest of all her sons. When he began to take notice and could walk about a little, he said to Itpumu one day: "Mother, are you going to travel about the world, or do you intend always to stay here?" She replied: "No, I shall never leave this place; and you, too, must never leave me." But Tarbong was very anxious to see the world, and at last persuaded his mother to let him go. She prepared some rice, put it in a bag, and sorrowfully let him go. He set off over the slopes of Konchen, after which he came to a place called Paki Chu.

From Paki Chu he descended to Palyung Chu, which is a plateau a little above Sakyong, in the Talung Valley. As he sat on Palyung Chu he saw below him many beautiful fruit trees, and many kinds of birds which were busily eating the fruit. As he sat watching the scene he ate the rice his mother had given him. He thought he had seen enough for the time being and hurried home to his mother. Arrived there he climbed at once on to her lap and searched for her breasts. While she was suckling him she asked him what he had seen: "Oh, Mother! I have been to Palyung Chu, where I saw the most beautiful trees, and many birds eating the fruit." To this Itpumu replied: "Now, my son, if you are indeed a real man you must get hold of *Yong Ming Yong-song* and *Komok Ki*. These are two special kinds of thread, and when

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581 you have found them you must make loops with which to
539 catch those birds."
773 Tarbong spent the night with his mother, and early the following morning he set off in search of the thread. At last he found a special kind of bamboo, which his mother had described to him. From this he cut a few branches, shredded them, and twisted them into thread. After this he again returned to his home.

The next morning he took his thread and again went down to Palyung Chu. He climbed up into a tree, fixed the thread-loops, and once more returned to his mother, telling her what he had done. "You must return early to-morrow," she said, "and see how many birds you have caught."

He did as he was told, and when he again reached Palyung Chu he found so many birds caught in his loops that he could only carry them back with difficulty. He reset his traps and set off home again. As soon as he got there he said to his mother: "If these birds are really edible please eat them yourself in return for all the milk I have had from your body: but if they are not fit to eat, then just throw them away." "They are very good to eat," said Itpumu, "and I will gladly eat them in exchange for my milk."

The following morning Tarbong again set off to examine his traps; but when he reached the place imagine his surprise when he found in his loops, not birds but wooden models of the human penis! He was very angry, and taking the objects out of the loops he threw them away, reset the traps, and once more returned to his mother.

Itpumu asked him why he had come back empty-handed. He told her what he had seen, whereupon she said that the following morning he must hide himself carefully in the bushes and watch what happened. She said he was to hide himself so carefully that even the insects and birds could not see him.

When he reached Palyung Chu he found that the same thing had happened again: once more the loops were filled with penises. Again he threw them away, reset the traps, and

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581 539 773

then hid himself as his mother had ordered him. Presently a very beautiful girl, whose name was Narip Nom, came to the spot. She sat down on the grass and at once began to fashion more wooden penises. As soon as Tarbong realised what she was doing he became very angry and rushed out of his hiding place. He caught hold of the girl, who was in reality his own sister, and immediately tried to ravish her. They struggled together for some little time; but since he met with no encouragement Tarbong at last desisted, and once more returned to his mother. "Well!" said Itpumu, "what did you see this time?" to which he replied: "Mother, I saw a very lovely girl making wooden penises. I tried hard to possess her, but she would not let me approach her." In reply to this Itpumu said: "Now, my son, if you really want to possess that girl you must go to your brother, he that lives in Ragzum Partam, and he will tell you what to do."

Tarbong at once set off to visit his brother. He told him the whole story: how he found the girl making penises and how he had tried unsuccessfully to rape her, and asked for his brother's advice. "I take it that you really want this girl," said the brother; to which Tarbong replied that he did. "Very well then, I must first tell you that you will never possess her until you have paid the marriage price (*Nyomfar*), and done the usual sacrifice (*Saunkyo Tsop Rumfat*). But first you must go to your Nepali blood-brother (*Ing-zong*) and buy a large copper vessel." Tarbong did as he was told, and was then ordered to go to his *Ing-zong* in Bhutan and bring back a length of a special kind of cloth (*Kamo*). He was then sent to his Tibetan *Ing-zong* to buy a rug (*Numbu*), and then to another Nepali blood-brother, who lived in the plains, to buy a special kind of pig called *Mulu Mayeng*. Next he was sent to Mayel and told to bring millet, after which he was ordered to visit yet another Tibetan in order to buy an ox. This also he did. Finally, his brother told him he must go to Mushyok Mutel, a place between heaven and earth, where there was a blacksmith, the only man in the world who at that time possessed any fire.

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539 581 773 Tarbong was afraid to visit this place. "It is the abode of devils," he said, "and they will surely eat me, a fate of which I am not at the moment desirous." When it was clear that Tarbong had no intention of visiting this place his brother called all the animals, birds, and insects together and asked if anyone among them would volunteer to go in search of fire, at the same time offering a handsome present in return for this service. A pheasant smiled to itself and said it was ready to go. He set off, and when he reached the house of the blacksmith, who really was a devil, he found it quite empty, since everyone was out working in the fields. He went inside, where a fire was burning, snatched up a brand and immediately flew away. On the way back he came to a chestnut tree and decided to stay and eat a little of the fruit; but before doing this he laid the brand on the ground. While he was searching for the fruit a strong wind got up. This spread the fire so much that before long the whole world appeared to be on fire. The pheasant ran off in fear, but did not dare to return to its master: but since it got scorched in the fire this explains why pheasants now have short tails and black faces.

Parbong and his brother waited a long time for the bird to return. They did not realise what had happened although, of course, they could see the flames and smoke spreading gradually over the world. At last they grew impatient and asked for another volunteer. This time the firefly said it was willing to go; but only for a really good reward. When it reached the blacksmith's house the firefly found that again it was empty, so he entered and looked for the fire. Unfortunately, however, he had no means of carrying it away. He did not immediately return but sat there for a bit with his head on the ground and his feet in the air. This had the effect of causing the house to turn upside down. After a little while the blacksmith himself returned, and was astonished to find what had happened to his house. He searched all round to see who had done this mischief, and at last noticed the firefly standing on its head. He tried hard to catch it but

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it managed to flutter away. "Why have you done this mischief?" said the blacksmith. "Now I am going to kill you." But to this the firefly replied: "Kill me, if you like, but remember that if you do your house will remain upside down for ever." He then went on to tell the blacksmith why he had been sent. The latter thought for a bit and at last replied: "All right, I will give you the fire, but first you must put my house in order again." The blacksmith then took up some fire to give the insect, but suddenly realised that it had no means of carrying it. He searched about in the house and at last produced a flint and some tinder. These he stuck into the firefly's bottom, which explains why this creature still goes about with a fire in its tail.

As soon as the firefly returned it showed the two brothers how to use the flint and tinder. The elder brother lighted a fire and thought he would prepare some *chi*, when he realised that he had nothing with which to make it ferment. He was somewhat at a loss to know what to do when one Takder Ting, a retainer of the family, volunteered to go and fetch the ferment from an old woman named Numli Nyu, who lived in the plains and who alone possessed the secret.

Takder Ting stayed with her for a few days and soon made himself useful about the house, as a result of which she soon grew used to his presence. After he had been there for a day or two the old woman decided to make some ferment; but before commencing her preparations she took particular care to cover Takder Ting with a *tangar*, which is a basket with such close mesh that he found it impossible to see out of it. When he had been covered over, however, he told the old woman that he could see everything, and suggested that if she really wanted to prevent him from seeing what she was doing it would be better to cover him with a *tung-jyang*, which is a special kind of basket with a very open mesh. The old woman believed his story and did as he suggested. He told her that he could see nothing at all, although he could, of course, see perfectly all that was happening.

He watched very carefully, and presently saw the old

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woman take a pot from inside her clothing and pour something out of it into her hand. This powder, for such it was, she mixed with the millet, after which she put the pot back inside her bosom. She now collected all the millet and put it inside a basket, at the same time telling Takder Ting that he could now uncover himself.

After two days the fermenting millet smelt delicious, and then the old woman put all the *chi* into an earthen pot and covered it well up. Takder tried hard to get possession of this pot, but the woman never let it out of her sight. He was also beginning to despair of ever obtaining the pot of ferment when suddenly he had an idea. He told the old woman that she had a great many lice in her hair and suggested that he should pick them out for her. To this she agreed; and while he was searching for the vermin, which took a very long time, the old woman got sleepy, so that he was able to extract the pot from her bosom; after which he ran off as hard as he could go. When he was well away from the house the old woman woke up to what had happened and shouted after him. "I thought you were a good grandson to me," she said, "but I find you are nothing more than a common thief. You have stolen my ferment and now my secret will be spread all over the world." Then she cursed him, saying: "May this thing, which is harmless now, make people drunk and senseless whenever they drink *chi* and when they are drunk may they quarrel among themselves." It is for this reason that nowadays drunken people often quarrel.

When Takder Ting returned he showed the two brothers how to make fermented *chi:* but since they had no earthen pots they made it in baskets and put it on the rack above the fire to dry and ferment, in exactly the same manner as is done by Lepchas nowadays. The brothers asked Takder Ting what reward he would like for all the trouble he had taken. "I want no gold and silver," he said; "nor do I want fine clothes. All that I wish is to be allowed to eat the remnants left on the plates after human beings have finished their meals, and the scraps that adhere to the spoon when

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cooking." This request was granted, and the descendants of Takder Ting, who was in reality a cockroach, continue to live on such things up to the present day.

The *chi* was now ready; but since up to that time no one had ever drunk it, it was decided that a cobra should taste it first. He got very drunk, and shot away like a streak of lightning. When the others saw this happen they were afraid to taste this new and potent liquid. They then called another snake, one called Pumel Beu, which is some kind of grass snake. He drank the *chi;* and soon got so excited that he started to bite the people and other animals who were sitting round about. All those he bit died within a few minutes, so that when Sungay Rum, the god who is in charge of all animals, saw what had happened he at once put a lock on Pumel Beu's mouth, so that he is nowadays almost harmless.

After this the snake Poblyuk Beu, the python, was called to drink; but since he was big and strong the *chi* only had the effect of making him sleepy and senseless, and very soon he curled up in the bushes, sleeping peacefully. When they saw this the people decided that there was no harm in *chi;* for were not human beings also big and strong?

The only thing now lacking was butter for the sacrifice of *Saunkyo Fat* and this Tarbong's brother himself fetched from their mother, who herself prepared it. He took it back, prepared nine bamboo containers of *chi*, and smeared a little butter round the rim of each, just as a Mun does to-day when he wants to make an offering. Now all the gods and humans gathered together for the feast and Tarbong was married to Narip Nom. All the marriage gifts, the copper pot, the rug, and so on, were placed on one side, and the ox was tied up near. This was then sacrificed by Tarbong's brother and consumed by the assembled company.

After this Tarbong found that his sister no longer refused his advances, and he lay with her regularly with increasing pleasure. But they never had any children.

114 172 up from time to time by the local population while working in the fields. Two decades ago these findings aroused the attention of a specialist; Sir Charles Bell, at that time Political Officer of Sikkim, had several of the discovered fragments brought to him, and at his direction the legend of the tower was also put down in writing. Unfortunately, however, this material never received a proper evaluation. —Through the courtesy of Sri T. N. Pulger, the owner of the Daramdin estate, within whose boundaries the site of the legendary tower building is situated today, I was able to obtain a reproduction of the report written for Sir Charles Bell and to take it into account in the present work.

/890/ 1. First Version

773 Most Lepchas who know the legend of the tower building are convinced that this enterprise was carried out by the original ancestors of the Lepcha people. This view is also expressed in the following Lepcha text which is reproduced first in orthographic transcription and then in translation.

/Lepcha text follows./ (2)

2. The text was translated with the kind assistance of Pastor T. S. Targain (Kalimpong).

The Story of the Ta-lom Plain

539 773 Long, long ago, when the creation of the world was completed, the Lepcha people, increasing in number after its creation, descended from /891/ the glacier mountain, (3) and the land of Ma-yel (4) was

3. According to legend, the Lepcha people had its origin on the mountain of Kanchenjunga, from whose glacial ice the original ancestral couple is supposed to have been created.

4. Concerning the land of Ma-yel cf. Gorer, Himalayan Village, p. 235 f.

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•539 filled with young Lepchas. At that time they decided to do the following: "We will build a tower in order to climb up to the sky and to pull it down with a hook"; this they had decided. Then they made the decision to pile small clay pots one upon the other [and in this way to build a tower]. The place they chose was the plain of Ta-lom. Here, in order to carry out the work, they divided all the people into three groups: first, a group who formed the pots from crushed earth; second, [a group] of bearers; and third, those who placed the pots in layers; thus they were divided.

Now they heaped the vessels one upon the other and, placing them in layers, they almost reached the sky; at this time they already saw the sky very near; those who were working on top—when they caught sight of the sky so close at hand—thought: "If we had a forked stick, then we could pull down the sky." Then they called down to those who were below: "Hand us a forked stick, we want to pull down the sky!" But those down below understood: "Tear down, knock down!" Those working at the top of the tower then called again: "Hand up a forked stick, we want to pull down the sky!" But those below once again understood: "Tear down!" Now those working below cried: "Shall we tear it down?" Then those above cried out in anger: "Yes, tear down! Tear down!"

So those who were down below now got hammers, axes, and clubs and began to shatter the vessels at the base. When they had already made good progress in their work, the tower suddenly came tumbling down, crushing everything. Those who had climbed up to the top as well as those who had worked close to the foot of the tower were all killed by the clay pots falling upon them. Those who survived could, however, no longer communicate with each other.

But to construct a tower like this, no one was capable formerly except the Lepchas; and the experienced men who could teach such work, these were Lepchas. Up until that time they had all spoken the same language, but now, since they could no longer understand one another, they parted ways. Some of them went up [to the north], some down [to the south], others to the east and some to the west. As a result of this separation they settled the entire world, and thus there arose the numerous peoples and tribes existing today. —The place to which [the Lepchas] descended from the glacier mountain after their creation, lies in present-day Sikkim, and it is a plain upon which a great rice field is now located.

/892/ 2. Second Version

773 614 Another version of the legend of the tower building, one which makes a claim to greater exactness, asserts that the erection of the tower was not undertaken by the ancestors of the Lepchas, but by a sib belonging to the Lepcha people which had the name Na ong. In present day Lepcha the word Na ong means "stupid fellow," —but it is probable that it took on this derogatory sense only later through the association of the sib name Na ong with the tradition of the absurd and unsuccessful tower building. In addition to the word Na ong sometimes the expression Chelickchom is also used as a designation for this clan; the latter word appears to come from the language of the Limbus, a people related to the Lepchas, and would thus strengthen the view encountered among the Limbus that the so-called Na ong or Chelickchoms were not Lepchas, but Limbus.

114 614 The chronicle of the maharajahs of Sikkim—in which the Na ong are listed among the Lepcha sibs—as well as the few scholarly publications that mention the name Na ong (5) report unanimously that

5. Das, The Lepcha people, p. 5.—G. B. Mainwaring, A Grammar of the Rong (Lepcha) Language (Calcutta, 1876), p. XX. —G. B. Mainwaring and A. Grünwedel, Dictionary of the Lepcha Language (Berlin, 1898), p. 189b. —De Beauvoir-Stocks, p. 359.

that sib has long been extinct. This assertion, to be sure, is not precisely true, for even at the beginning of this century there lived, near the place at which originally the tower was supposed to have been constructed, a family whose members regarded themselves as the last descendants of the Na ong tribe. In designating themselves they used the expression "tribe" /Stamm/. The head of this family, a man named Karandal, seems, however, to have been the only one who was still very familiar with the traditions of the Na ong. It was therefore he who gave the information for the report handed over to Sir Charles Bell. According to the information of the last preserver of the Na ong traditions, the building of the tower and the later history of the tribe ran as follows:

773 539 It was in gray primeval times that the tribe of the Na ong came into the world. The place that supposedly became the birthplace of

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●539 this tribe is situated in Sikkim, close to the confluence of the Raman and the Lingkhim Khola, within the realm of the Daramdin Estate. The ancestors of the Na ong, created inside the earth, emerged here from a gigantic hollowed boulder, which one could still see on the bank of the Raman a generation ago. (6)

6. During the heavy rains of the year 1899 this boulder was dragged deeper into the river bed where it is finally supposed to have sunk in the sand.

After their arrival on the surface of the earth the Na ong settled down at the place called Phugamdin, which today lies in the north-eastern part of the great rice field belonging to the Daramdin estate. /893/ — One day they became aware of the vault of heaven spreading above their heads, and since they thought that it was very low, they decided to build a tower of pots in order to reach the sky.* — Since all the members of the tribe declared themselves in agreement with this plan, they immediately began to carry it out. The foundation of the tower was erected on the level surface of the present day Daramdin Field. The work progressed rapidly, and the building finally became so high that only two or three pots were still needed in order to complete the work. Because of this, the men working at the top of the tower became very excited. They called down to the helpers working below to hand up the required number of pots quickly. Now the command was passed down from man to man through the long chain of helpers; and when it finally reached the workers at the foot of the tower, its sense was already completely distorted; for now they understood it to mean that the tower was no longer necessary and should be torn down because the men standing at the top had already reached the sky. The men, women and children on the ground therefore proceeded to smash the lowest pots and as a result the entire construction collapsed with a terrible roar, burying beneath it all the members of the tribe. During its fall the tower broke into three great pieces, one of which fell on the mountain called Kaijalia within the limits of the present day Karmi estate, while a second portion of the tower plunged onto the Maney Hill in the precincts of the Relling estate, and the third piece finally came down near the village of Phedap, in the Nepalese district of Ilam. By the impact the above-mentioned mountains were pressed in to such an extent that today they show a clear saddle form.

113 Only a single man escaped from the disaster alive. Frightened
● 537 by what had happened and fearing the wrath of the divinity, which in his opinion had brought about the annihilation of the members of his tribe, he determined to leave the place of misfortune and to seek an abode in Nepalese territory.

Therefore he went to the village of Phedap, where he married one of the girls of this place. In the course of time once again a tribe was formed from his numerous descendants. It likewise was designated as Na ong. But this generation of the Na ong also didn't prove to be much smarter than its ancestors.

[118] One day the Na ong decided to kill the fish in the sacred river Mai-khola, which flows near the village of Phedap. This river was regarded as the seat of a mighty divinity, to whom at one time thousands of animals were sacrificed once a year by the local Nepalese population. The blood of these animals colored the stream red for days.

The Na ong thought now that the local millet beer, called marwa, was probably the best poison to kill the fish; since it could make a strong man drunk, it was surely well-suited to destroy all the fish living in this river. Therefore they poured /894/ huge quantities of millet beer into the stream, but the divinity of the river, enraged by this sacrilege, killed the entire tribe on the spot. Only a boy and an old woman escaped annihilation.

The woman took care of the boy, and when he had finally grown to manhood, he married, (7) and his descendants again lived in the

7. Tradition does not tell to what tribe his wife belonged.

village Phedap. But the tribe never again flourished — a fact ascribed to the displeasure of the river god who, despite all the sacrifices offered to it by subsequent generations of the Na ong, would not be pacified. When finally only a few Na ong were alive, about sixty years ago, one of them named Kaipal decided to leave the settlement on the banks of the Mai-khola and move with his family near the place where his ancestors had once built the tower; for here — so he thought — the remainder of the tribe would escape the wrath of the river god and, under the protection of the ancestral spirits, would again increase in number. His son Karandal, the transmitter of this legend, later married a Limbu girl from the Malboma sib in the new

113 dwelling place; this marriage produced four sons and three daughters,
●539 who, however, were apparently absorbed in the families of the neighboring Limbu. Thus the tribe of Na ong was finally completely extinguished.

113 The place where, according to the legend, the construction of the tower was undertaken is a plateau about two kilometers square situated in the western part of Sikkim, near the Indian-Nepalese border. To the west it is screened by a chain of mountains; to the south and the northeast it is bounded by two rivers. In the deeply fissured landscape of the Himalayan foothills a level plain of such proportions is a great rarity, and hence the plateau is clearly visible from a distance. It was subsequently transformed almost completely into a rice field, and only its extreme eastern corner, which bears the name Phugamdin and where — according to the legend —the first settlement of the Na ong arose, is uncultivated and today serves as a burial place for the Limbus, who recently settled in this part of Sikkim. (8)

8. A scholarly work on the burial methods of the Limbus — as well as an exhaustive investigation of this tribe — has unfortunately not yet been written. According to reports available up to now, the Limbu dead are generally buried, but sometimes cremated. Without doubt, however, the potsherds discovered in Daramdin cannot be grave-goods of the Limbus, for the Lepchas, who are sufficiently aware of the customs of this neighboring tribe — would in this case have ascribed no special significance to such findings.

172 While people are farming on the plateau — especially during the spring plowing — potsherds are constantly discovered; understandably enough, these findings are connected by the local inhabitants to the legend of the tower. Despite repeated questioning I still have not yet succeeded in obtaining some of the findings for closer examination; apparently the unearthed fragments are heedlessly thrown away by the populace.

/895/ The conditions which prevail at present in the Tibetan-Indian border region make it impossible, for the time being, to undertake any extensive investigation on the spot, and particularly any systematic excavations. I must therefore limit myself here to the observation that, according to the statement of the local inhabitants,

533 kindness of my wife who took it down in European notation. The first of these songs, *A-chu-lé*, shows traces of the very old pentatonic scale, says Sir Sourindro Mohun Tagore, to whom I showed it, and he adds in regard to this scale 'though it is observable in the Scotch ballads, it is the scale (still) in use amongst the Chinese, Japanese and Siamese'.

533 In the first song it will be noticed that the first verse has more even measure than any of the others and is evidently the oldest and purest. In the second, the resemblance ●539 between the primordial grand mother and Eve is very striking. The third and last verses, with their numerous Tibetan words and references to Buddhist symbolism, are decidedly modern, though many of their words have retained their *Tsoñ-bor* expressions.

I.

A-chu-lé!

O Joy!

A - chu lé - - - - - - - - - kal
tak - bo - Ram nan ya yit-tañ söd Lyañ Ta-sé ram yä nan yit-tañ
söd Zor sak-dum ku-lañ-mik tam ö-re ha S'äm-män mi zon
yit-tó-tatt ka Gi po-boñ po-mik yit duk-kañ söd Mo-tan-chi roñ kap ka-yu gam O

A-chu-lé!
539 *Kāl* [1]) *Tak-bo Ram nan yä yit-tañ söd*
Lyäñ Ta-se Ram yä nan yit-tañ söd
Zor sak-dam ku-lañ-mik täm ö-re-hä

S'äm-män-mi zon yit tó-tatt ka
Gi po-boñ po-mik yit duk kañ söd

Motanchi Roñ kap ka-yu gam o.

A-chu-lé!
Tar-s'i-s'am Nam-byoñ kuñ yit so
Loñ-bi-loñ yit war-ñu-bä uñ yit so-ö-re
Ñu-yit sok-ö-re ta-lyäñ fo yit ma-o

O Joy!
The *kāl* Head-Father-Spirit in the olden time
Made the earth. (He) The Sky-Existing One
Made in this tearful [2]) world the fields to cover the
(bosom of the stones.
When the *Shom-man-mi* men were made
And the *gi* jointed Bamboos and trees, at that same
(time were we
The sons of the (one-) Mother-flesh jolly Rongs.

O Joy!
The *far-shi-shom* mullberry [3]) trees were made,
The rice, the vegetables were made,
The running rivers with the *so-ö-re* fishes were made

[1]) This has been suggested to me as meaning „dark", that is to say „mysterious", and thus implying that it has been borrowed from the Indian *Kāla*; but it seems to me to be a pure Lepcha word.
[2]) Also „rainy" (*mar*).
[3]) „Nambyong" is *Morus serrata*. The fruit also of „Nambong" (*Adina cordifolia*) is eaten.

●539

Ze-kik-dyoł yił ku-dź-ren yił taṅ kaṅ

Ya-t'iṅ nan yił taṅ sōd
Taṅ san-roṅ yił ho nan yił ma o.

A-CHU-LÉ!
Mil-tek-mo ho yił s'o-tiṅ-mo yak yił-taṅ sōa.

Lēṅ-ser-mo tim-bre ka-ko-mu li-so

Ya-nan yił-taṅ sōd s'el-mān-ti lyon s'ok

Nin-mān-ti ñin s'ok kā s'al-li-mu ā-li gó
Mu-s'el nan kā s'al-li-mu lyat ma lel-na pu
Yok kar-vo kap cham-bu gó s'u diṅ ma o.

A-CHU-LÉ!
Lu-ma-bor ka-bam lik-lar mān dyaṅ bam

Fat ma yan naṅ ka lik-la-mān ka-s'ok.
Hyap-la-mān dyaṅ tyat ma bon nan yoṅ 'sō

Dā-sa mām tan-bo mi-taṅ-ding

Cham-bo kap nan mi-f'ik-mo s'u yūā lel-la.
A-chu-le! Sām-pā dup. Ta-s'i s'a. [1]

The *Sok-o-re* sky-birds were made. The ground bag-
(dyoł worms,
The *ku do-ren* insects and the rain bow were made
(All) by our first old great grand father.
(But our) *taṅ-san-dong* [2] troubles were made by our
(old first great grand mother.

O Joy!
Then the *sho-ting* letters and the *mal-tong-mo* books
(were made
The *ling-s'em-no* symbols [3] and the *bo-ko-mo* augu-
(ries *li-so*
If by my *s'el-man-ti* feeble attempts and *ñin-man-ti*
(childish blunders
My *s'al-li-mu* tongue has not been fluent
I pray you will not cut off my *s'al-li-mu* tongue
(For) I am (only) a kar-vo young boy singing standing.

O Joy!
With my *lū-ma-bor* folded hands and *lik-la-ma*
(folded hands.
With my not being able to unfold them
I beg you will not cut my *lik-la-ma* fingers and
(*kyam-lā-ma* feet
(For) I am a *da-sa-mam* paltry one, and a *mi-tang-ding*
(child
Struggling *mi-f'ik-mo* I what can I sing?

II.

En-Ye!

A NEW YEAR'S SONG.

Only the first and last verses of this song appear to be ancient, the middle verse contains many Tibetan phrases and words.

EN YE!
Zor sak-dam lang-mik tām a-re-kā
Prat-tak-ñom sak-ñi sa-rong ra
Put nam-nu lo zum gun nam-nu zum
Ryu ñaṅ sa sak-ñi ong sa so-nāp yum.

EN YE!
Sher ts'o-di kik-tsum t'soṅ ñaṅ so
Chi-kar-mom s'ok [4] *bi-kar-tsām du ñaṅ so*
Pe-re gi-po-tsar nam apin sa om [5] *tim-bre*
Yim-bu yoṅ lab-dan shu dik ma.

EN YE!
All the Rong and their kin have collected this day
On the field-covered stony bosom of the tearful earth
To-day is the day of happiness
To-night is the night of strength (renewed for the
(New-Year).

We have *bi-kar-mom s'ok*, *bi-kar-chan* assembled
By the decree *of s'ar* fate and *Om* signs [6]
We sing this humbly standing up
For good luck for the *gi-po-tsāk* coming year.

---

[1] The last two phrases are Tibetan.
[2] The *d* as usually in Lepcha is often written *r*.
[3] *Tim-bre* from Tibetan *rten-'brel*, the Buddhist *Nidānas* or Concatenation of Causes of Existence: this is viewed by the Lepchas as a magical charm, and the *Tuk-bor* expression annexed may have belonged to an older word for such charms
[4] The written version has *s'ep*.
[5] This syllable is out of the place in written version.
[6] Literally *tim-bre* = *Nidānas*.

● 537 En Ye!

Mo-tan-chi Reñ kap ñun non bün	We are the sons of the (one) Mother-flesh jolly Rongs
So-lä-non po-kong yit duk kañ as	We were made along with the *so-la-non* bamboos
	And the *ar-tsam* Bamboo-joints and the small reed (Bamboos [1])
Ar-tsam po-nig duk kañ su pa-t'or beñ	We the sons of the (one-)Mother-flesh jolly Rongs
Yit duk kang as Reñ kap yam yoñ s'u s'u.	Are of equal age (with the Bamboos)!

---

[574] [273] The following three songs are love-laments, the first by a languishing spinster and the others by lovesick swains. The reference in some of them to the "dear sisters" standing behind, relates to the present practice of the girls of the family who stand behind the guests to replenish their bamboo cups of *marwa* millet beer [2].

III.

U-LA-DUÑ DÜT.

A LOVE LAMENT.

[533]

U-la-chiñ düt su t'äm liop-läna t'el nom gó liop- lä na-t'el nom gó nom
gó Ñäl bli düt su s'el lop lä na t'el nom gó - - lop lä na t'el nom gó nom gó.

U-la duñ düt su-t'äm liop-lä na-t'iel nom gó.	I (am) a maiden [3], like an unopened bud [4].
Ñäl-bli düt su-s'el " " " "	Like a supple shuttle [5].
Soñ la lyen s'u /añ-ruñ " " " "	Like a whirling spindle [6].
Ka-fer ki-rum nañ näñ liop-lä diñ mit nom gó.	I stand a maiden, like a twirling spinning thread.
S'er la tañ-kat su-s'el " " " " "	Like a bright golden tassel.
Mit tak-yum diñ-mit nom " " " " "	A maiden I stand (forlorn) behind.
S'ung fo s'ot la-bäl-la liop-lä na-t'iel nom gó.	I (am) a maiden like a tender coiled bud.
Tak-mok fo s'ot ngañ näñ " " " "	Like a sorrowing *S'uñ* bird.
Säk la ma run na me " " " "	Like a loudly lamenting Takmok bird.
Loñ la ma run na me " " " "	I feel very sad!

IV.

THE PANGS OF LOVE.

Chin-che-ns tak-sok buk go na t'äm na-gañ	Though I tasted not the wild *chin-che-ns* yam [7]
Kyoñ-rün-lo lat dok S-tim-bu lät non-ni	I feel great pain in my *kyoñ-rün-lo* heart.

---

[824] [231] [415] [222]

[1]) *Pa-shor* is a small reedy bamboo, grass which is a favorite fodder for cattle. The largest bamboo from which pitchers are made is „Pa" or „Poa" (*Dendrocalamus Hamiltonii*, NEES & ARNOT). It is often 6 to 8 inches in diameter.

[2]) This beer brewed from the fermented seed of millet (*Eleusine crocana*) is served out in bamboo-pitchers or poñ-t'ut, from which it is sipped up through a thin bamboo tube called poñ-bin, so called, because it is scraped and polished, from *po*, a bamboo and *bip*, to scrape.

[3]) Literally „Slater".

[4]) The folded bud of a growing shoot, such as the plantain or banana (*Musa sapiens*).

[5]) *Ñal-bli*, a weaving rod.

[6]) *lun-s'u*.

[7]) Tak-sok-buk or „Forest yam". This is a very deeply set wild yam, growing 4 to 6 feet below surface and is only to be dug up with great labour.

● 539

Fŏa-rŏa-liṅ kar-gok go-ma zom-na-gaṅ
Ār-tan-tasm bit dok ā-tim-bu lāt non-ni
Chuṅ-as-li ka-ask go ma-t'āu na-gaṅ
Mar-ño bŏu vā not ā-tim-bu lāt non-ni.

Though I ate not the *fŏa-rŏa-liṅ* wild plantain.[1])
I feel great pain in my *ar-tan-tasm* liver.
Though I took not the wild *chan-as-li* yam[2])
I am burned up with a fiery thirst.

V.

Eh Ye!
Sāk-la ma-run-ne loṅ la ma-run-ne
Mīt tan-gum nom-t'om ṅā-par-ño soṅ-ka
Kyoṅ-ra-lo lat ā-re re favi-lā go
Ār-tan-tasm byut la-kaṅ kyāṅ la go ma.

Eh Ye!
I feel very sad.
Listen O maidens behind! (respected) as *ṅā-par* great-(mothers
I feel this *kyoṅ-ra-lo* heart (of mine)
Is pierced through and my *ar-tan-tasm* breath[3]) is chill.

Eh Ye!
Go-roṅ ño! Sāk la ma-run-ne
S'er t'so-di zuk-bo ram ho num a
Om kiṅ-tasm a'u noṅ-ñaw go dun bo che
Sak-la ma-run-ne loṅ la ma-run-ne

Eh Ye!
I feel very sad.
O Head-Father spirit, creator of *S'er* fate.
Tell me what is my *Om* destiny!
I feel very sad!

Eh Ye!
S'i-mān-mi kap gi-par-voṅ ñin kap so-lo noṅ
Ki-dak tasm-ga-non san-roṅ
S'u mat noṅ ñaṅ go yoṅ a'ū diṅ ma ó
Sāk la ma-run-ne loṅ la ma-run ne.

Eh Ye!
I (am only) a *S'i-mān-mi* boy,
A *gi-par-voṅ* youngster. I implore you humbly standing
Why have you given me this *so-lo-non* and *tasm-la-non* (sorrow
I feel very sad.

VI.

Fak-tasm-mon na yon
K'iṅ tasm vaṅ na s'en
Mi-t'ik-mo a'u yāṅ
Kiṅ tasm vaṅ na len
Duk-mar-bŏu som t'ai
Tuk-ta-li Nā-soṅ ño!
Zām-as-li Fa-dun t'iṅ
A-yu ru-ma ó
Kyoṅ-ra-lo lat dok
Ar-s'i ban a'u yit
S'em ta-t'i a'u yit
Gi-par-vim a'u de.

O you with the flowing hair!
O fair one with the neat parted hair!
Why have you *mi-t'ik-mo* charmed me so?
You fair one with the neat parted hair!
O old great grandmother *Tuk-ta-li Nā-soṅ*
You *duk-mar-bŏu* joiner of our breath
O old great grandfather *Zam-as-li* lord *Fa-dun*
Praise be to your names!
(But) why have you *ar-s'i-ban* created me?
Why have you *s'em-ta-mi* created me?
Why have you *gi-par-vim* created me?
To suffer such heart-breaking sorrow?

The following seems a figurative declaration of affection by a youth of the valley the Singbali-river towards a girl of the Kirungpata-glen.

---

[222]
[137]

[1]) *Kar-gok* is the wild plantain (*Musa sp.*). It is full of large sharply jagged and irritant seeds. The cultivated plantain *Kar-dun* is seedless.

[2]) *Ka-sok* is a hairy round wild yam of large size, which grows near the surface of the ground, but its tubers cause intense thirst. Other wild yams found in Sikhim are *Sa-um-buk*, *Sak-gol-buk* and *Se-li-buk* (?) probably the *Chuṅ-as-li* of text.

[3]) Literally „Lungs".

539

VII.

S'ik-bū-li uk-kuk [1] *ai-bo re to gó s'en,*
Mit tak-gum na-lem [2]
Ki-ruk [3] *pā-tā uk-kon ai-bo re to gó s'en*
Gi-yok-tauk fa-lak nam gó ni yu [4]

O! who changed the course of the Singbali [5] river?
It was the powerful fairy, the sister [6] who is behind?
O! who changed the course of the Kirungpata river?
It was a powerful like me a *gi-yok-tauk* young brother!

The reference to the rupee and the occurrence of several Tibetan words in the following, shows its modern character; though it may be founded on an older version.

VIII.

Kar-so kap c'am-bu gya-lam-bi [7] *lyat aó na li*
Dik-tam-pdu kom kat bo yat sáu yok s'ū
S'ik mā-yi [8] *p'i-lik a-t'ok tauk sa gū-lā yo*
Sāk la ma-rum-ne lak la ma-rum-ne. [9]

Oh come with me, a little *kar-so* boy to the cross-roads
And I will give thee a *ding-tam-pū* [10] rupee
Though I have taken refreshing *Shing-mai* foreign (snuff
My heart is swelled with grief.

IX.

INHOSPITALITY.

539 *Yuk-mo tuk-ook hūp tāu bā*
574 *A-som tup ma-aó na-mā*
Hao-dó tuk-ook ok tāu bā
563 *Ñat-* [11] *lyat a-som tup so s'a.*

When a Yangmo's door is shut
One cannot find foot to eat
But when his door is wide open
One gets food to fully satisfy.

This may be paraphrased as follows: "Even when a Yungmo's door is open wide there is nothing to eat though plenty inside". It refers to the notorious inhospitality of the Yungmo and other half-breed Lepchas who have intermarried with the Limbu tribe and so treat the pure Lepchas disdainfully. Other such mixed groups of Limbus and Lepchas are the *Mang-mū-mo* (in the Kulhait valley), *Lak-som-mo* in the Rathony valley, and the *Ling-dam-mo* and *Sak-mi-mo*, all of whom are proverbially inhospitable. Finally I wish to acknowledge the assistance I received from Mr. D. MACDONALD in getting the Lepcha manuscript of several of the songs, and for help in interpreting several points.

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[1] *Uk-kuk* is a 'branch rivulet'. [2] Or *na-lim*.
[3] Or *Ñi-ruk*. [4] Or *yuk*.
[5] Name of a river in Sikhim to the South of Darjeeling which through a landslip cut out a new course for itself.
[6] *Mit* is usually applied to a water-fairy. The phrase attached to this word means literally 'true understanding', but is said to mean 'behind'.
[7] This word is Tibetan. [8] Or *S'am-ma-ū*. [9] Or *Mar-yon-ne*.
[10] The *tam* of this phrase may either be the descriptive „flat thing", or it may be the Indian *tanka*, the rupee, as coins are not indigenous. [436]
[11] Or *Kat*.

ORIGINAL TEXTS OF THE FOREGOING SONGS.

9.

539 ཀོ་ཐ་ཏུ་ཏེ་ཁོ་ཏོ་ཀུ་ཁ་ཀུ་ཁ་ཀུ་ཁ་ཀུ་
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6.

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[p. 54]

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11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

dong-bong, who is a mountain goddess in the plain. There exist many other variations about the sequence of creation.

Then Rum made the two rivers, Rong-nyo and Rong-nyit, to flow down from the mountains. They are male and female. In the middle of the female Rong-nyo, he created the rock, Lyang-nyit-long-bong, similar to the navel in the human body. A high mountain, regarded as the navel of the world is a well-known conception in Asia. The goddess, Lyang-nyit-long-bong, is supposed to live on this rock and childless parents pray to her to be blessed with children. The idea of male gods having their abode on the snow-capped mountains and the goddesses in the lakes, is fairly common among the Lepcha. These gods and goddesses are often linked with the first parents in Lepcha mythology.[25]

The sacrificial prayers of the Mun and the Bong thing are often preceded by a legend of creation. The text which we shall later render in detail begins thus :

"Fa dong dju fa dong dō gom shi gom yu rum !
Fa dong dju and Fa dong dō (personal male and female deities) and Gom shi, Gom yu rum (hunting gods).
Lyang it ung it lyang sog dōm it
The earth was created, the water was created and the whole world was created.
Chi log so log it
Millet beer and husked rice were created
Lyang tōg bu ta she it ga.
Lyang wife, and Tōg bu ta she's son (man) were created"[26]

Another part reads as follows :

"Ayan na ba lyang ung ma it ma den na ba.
In very ancient times when land and water were not yet created."

An old report has the words :

"Ta she nun rum ayit .....Ta she created the good spirits
Num shim nyo ayit .....He created man.
Lyang ayit .....He created the earth.
Ung ayit .....He created water
Gun pang ayit .....He created all things."[27]

25. Report of Gu-gu Bong thing at Git biyong.
26. Text of Gu-gu Bong thing.
27. Dictionary of the Lepcha language, op. cit., p. 121 b.

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

On the right side of this plate is an earthenware pot filled with water. The Bong-thing sits in front of the sacrifice with his back to the fire. Beside him is an assistant holding a brazier with incense. The incense consists of dried twigs from the cypress trees of Tibet. The Lepchas call the tree "dag-dŏl-gung." The priest takes in his right hand the "purifier" which is made out of three branches of Amliso, *i.e.* Po-chior. He then summons the god and when the branches move to and fro, it is a sign that the spirit has come. Now the Bong-thing begins the sacrificial prayer, "Sang so (incense is burnt); tza ni bu tza lo! tzab den bu geno! (Incense offering! Tibetan name—magic formula, praying it, holy water is to be sprinkled from the pitcher; it appears to be corrupt Tibeta tzab, which is the same as chab, signifying water.)

"To the star god, the Gun dŏ god, the sun god, the Sam yig god, the Sog god, the Gŏm shi god, the Gŏm yu god (I make) this offering of incense. The offering (I make) in the smoke of incense. Come hither O gods! Gold Torma and money Torma I offer in sacrifice. Come hither Ka to and Gon hiu. I offer in sacrifice. Spirit of the millet beer—and spirit of the rice offering come hither. The sacrifice is offered, the incense offering is made. tza ni bu tza lo! tzab den bu geno (magic formula). Goddess Amu mŏn mu, Ha mu, Mi lig mu, Miă song mu, Chu mu, Yuk mu, Se mu; son Chu go ri go chen chen, daughter-in-law Nyom mu, father and mother! [80]

00. sa hor rum bu gun dŏ rum bu sa dzug rum bu sam yig rum bu
(to the) star god, Gun dŏ god, sun god, Sam yig god,

sog rum bu gŏm shi rum bu gŏm yu rum bu sang blong ga
Sog god, Gom shi god, Gŏm yŭ god, offering of incense

pŏ blong ga! (incense is offered here) kŏg ma o! dyăr pa dong, gom pa
in smoke, incense offering, in smoke! come here! Gold Torma, money

dong dzăn dong dăm dong hiu o! Ka to gon chiu blong ga! dzăn dang
Torma sacrifice! sacrifice! Ka to and Gon hiu come here! sacrifice,

hiu dăm dong hiu ma o. Chi log so log
sacrifice! Millet beer(spirit), rice offering (spirit)

blong ga dzăn dong hiu dăm dong hiu o! ŏn sang so! sang so!
come here! sacrifice! sacrifice! Incense offering, incense offering!

tza ni bu tza lo! tzab den bu geno! Amu mŏn mu, ha mu, mi lig mu,
(Magic formula while water is sprinkled) (All are names for the wife of

miă song mu, chu mu, yuk mu, se mu; chu go ri go chen chen bu
the God). (Name of the son of the Supreme God)

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776 I offer the smoke of incense. Come hither! To the father and to
755 the mother I offer gold Torma, I offer money Torma; I offer,
762 I offer, I offer incense to San tug kan dro mu; come hither!
I offer incense; come hither! I offer to Chi, the millet beer spirit, to the rice offering spirit, to Dyö, the millet beer spirit; come hither! Verify this, O God, that we are sick. Come hither and tell it; come here and say it. How the head is racked with pain, the loins ache, the body, the hands, the feet are paining and the belly is aching, this O God verify. Come hither and state it. How the demons bite that examine ye gods; come here and tell it. In this manner I sacrifice this bound bull for the sick person. As a substitute for the body and the soul I offer this bull. I offer this substitute of life; I sacrifice this bound bull as a substitute for the body. I sacrifice this bound bull to Ge bu."[60a]

● [539] 60a. nyom mu — yab yum pong
(Daughter-in-law of the Supreme God). — Father, mother (Tibetan names for the whole family of the God.)

sang blong ga kög ma o ! yab yum dyär pa dong
I offer smoke of incense ! Come here ! To Father, Mother I offer gold Torma.

gom pa dong dzän dong hiu fat ma o
I offer money Torma, I offer ! I offer !

San tug kan dro mu sang blong ga kög gad mao.
To San tug Kan dro mu offer of incense ! Come here !

plö blong ga kög gad mao !
offer of incense, come here !

chi log so log sang dyö ma djin blong ga
Millet beer (spirit), Rice offer (spirit), Millet beer (spirit) offer !

kög gad mao ao yu song dog non rum dyop ga plö buo dön ga
Come here ! That we are sick, examine this O God now. Come here and tell us.

plö buo sareb song adyak non
Come here and say it. How the head aches,

achyang dog non me so dog non a go a tong dog
the loins pain, the body pains, hands and feet pain,

ta bak dog a yu rum pong dyop ga plö buo !
the belly aches. O God examine these things. Come here and tell it.

an sareb song mung nöng tzug bang ga rum dyop ga plö buo
How the demons bite examine that ye gods. Come here and tell it.

alom bö mad big djäk chim yu re söm
In this way I sacrifice this bound bull for the sick person.

me sö löm sa lo löm big bu
As a body substitute, as a soul substitute I sacrifice this bull.

sok löm bu me sö löm
I sacrifice this substitute of life, as a body substitute

big djäk bu mo Ge bu long big long djäk bu mo.
this bound bull I sacrifice. To the Ge bu, this bull, this bound bull I sacrifice."

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765 782 776 From the Gu-gu Bong-thing we procured the text of another prayer said during the sacrifice of a sick person: "Fa dong dju and Fa dong dō, Gom shi, Gom yu gods! (invocation). The earth was created, the water was created, the whole world was created. The millet beer offering chi and the rice offering so were created. The Tōg bu ta she was created. Come hither, ye spirits. For the benefit of the creatures, of the world, and of the whole existing creation I sacrifice in this manner. Against suffering and harm I sacrifice. For myself I sacrifice. To the house-hold gods I sacrifice. As it has been handed down from the beginning of earth's creation, so must we sacrifice. Then to the deities of this house (of the sick man), to the Great God of the aTzam sacrifice, to the gods [774] of the soul and the life-spirit (of the sick man), to the Darmit[61]

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61. Fa dong dju fa dong dō
Fa dong dju and Fa dong dō (names for the male and female family gods; dong is the tribal name; dju is the male Himalayan mountain spirit; dō is the female spirit, that comes from the river).

gom shi gom yu rum lyang it ung it
Gom shi and Gom yu gods! The earth was created, the water was created,

lyang sōg dōm it chi log so log it
the whole world was created. Millet beer offering, rice offering were created.

lyang tōg bu ta she it ga.
Then Tōg bu ta she was created. (This is Tak bo thing or Ta she thing so often mentioned, who was the first man or the son of the Supreme God Ta she thing.)

plō sog dōm long ming
Come here! (invitation to the spirits). For the creature's interests of the

dam ga son dōn dog ga alom sug bam
whole world and of the whole existing creation I sacrifice in this manner.

adog anot sa pe ka sug bam
Against suffering and harm I sacrifice.

ga do sug to bam rum dar ngag to bam
For myself I sacrifice also. To the household gods I sacrifice at once.

yang ayit plō nōng
Likewise as it has been handed down from the beginning of earth's creation

sug gad bam along do do li rum
thus must we make sacrifice. Now to the deities of this house, to the

atzam athing rum
Great God of the aTzam sacrifice (aTzam sacrifice is the name of the sacrifice which is laid on the bull's forehead, as we saw above),

mung gung man la rum pong darmit rum pong
to the soul and the life-spirit (of the sick man) gods, Darmit gods,

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and the Dartik gods, to the water and the flood gods, to all the gods together I sacrifice now. To our life-spirits and soul gods, to Darmit, the god of life's destiny, to Alat and Ayek, the gods of procreation, to the benefactors of the souls, to the gods who lend the strength of life, I must sacrifice, since I know how to do so. The god of my personal destiny is witness; if I do not sacrifice—then may a long illness come. But if I do know how to perform the right sacrifice—that is a godly thing. If I do not know how to perform the right sacrifice but sacrifice, that is a devilish thing. If I do not perform the right sacrifice—then may the demons come here. In this manner, O Ayek and Alat, come to this spot here. Traitors shall we be to the ancestral gods if we, the descendants, sacrifice in this (wrong) way. Thus we sacrifice (rightly) as is our duty. As our ancestors did—so do we honour (the gods) We, the living, set on this spot (bull's head) millet beer and[61].

61a. dartik rum pong
Dartik gods (both are supposed to be female and male messengers, who bring news to the priest who performs the sacrifice; they are familiar deities of the Lepchas)

ung fat ung glum rum pong sug ngag la bam
to the water and the flood goods, to them altogether I sacrifice now.
dö dö dzam bi dzam myong rum pong khing tzung darmit rum pong
Our own life-spirits and soul gods, god of life's destiny, Darmit,
ayek alat rum pong dzö bön pu rum pong
gods of procreation, Ayek and Alat, gods as benefactors of the soul,
ong bon pu rum pong djü la mat mong
the gods who lend the strength of life; if I know how to sacrifice, so
sug yu gong nön dö dö khing tzung go nöng sug ma yön gong
I must do it. The god of my personal destiny knows it; if I do not
nön dö dö a rö a riom plö cho djü la nag yö
sacrifice, then may a long illness come, come. But if I do know
gong la rum göm
how to perform the right sacrifice, then is that a godly thing.
djö la nag ma yö nöng gong na mung göm
But if I do not know how to perform the right sacrifice that is a demoniah thing.
dö dö sug la ma yöng gong na mung ni gom
If I do not perform the right sacrifice, then shall the demon be here.
a lom sog döm ga ayek alat plö
In this way and at this place Ayek and Alat come here!
nyö ting sa rum göm go yu gab djong
We shall not become traitors to the ancestral gods, if we,
ati adzo nong ga su gad shö bu sa yuk
the descendants, sacrifice in this way. It is our duty to sacrifice thus.
rlö thing ga sing long fat sa yuk gom
As our ancestors did, so we also do honour in this way.
go yu son nin sog döm ga chi log so log mat nön.
We, the living, set on this spot (head of the bull) millet beer and rice-offering.

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755 rice-offerings. Thus we sacrifice. As our ancestors in ancient
782 times did—so do we now. We do not know how to speak in
776 this world; but we have arranged the sacrifice. As this world's life-spirit we, creatures, hold the branches of the Na sŏ and Na ling trees. We, the sons of Bong-thing, the Bong-thing sons of fire, hold them in our hands. That is the place to carry the Na sŏ and Na ling branches which I take consciously. Now I swear an oath to Ta she tak bo thing. Therefore I push a stone into the earth and I plant a beautifully decorated bamboo in the earth (as witnesses of the oath). In this place I take the oath. I do it in our own interest. Today, in this very place I take the oath. The paths of the demons are barred. Through the wonderful powers of Ta she tak bo thing I offer this sacrifice. Henceforward we offer a compensation, a bodily substitute: Send no more suffering to this person."[61b]

[539] 61b. Fat bam a re a thing a niŏ sa dal thing gung dŏ si syit
Thus we sacrifice. As our ancestor did since ancient times,
plŏ nŏng sug bam
so we also perform the sacrifice.
sog dŏm lyang ga go yusŏng dŏn ma hŏn go yu rum
In this world we do not know how we should speak. We have arranged
tek so sog
the sacrifice (rum, god, has also the meaning of sacrifice). As this
dŏm lŏng ming tang ga son chio nin cho sa liang ga na sŏ na ling
world's life spirit we, creatures, hold here branches of the Na sŏ and Na ling
nom bong thing kŏb
trees (similar to the Nepalese Panisage and Sau tree). We, Bong-thing sons,
bong thing la mi kŏb nŏng ga sog dŏm ga
we, Bong-thing sons of fire, hold them in our hands. Here in this place carrying
na sŏ na ling nom hŏ nŏng go tsam nŏng ga.
the Na sŏ na ling branches, I takr hold of them consciously.
ta she tak bo thing riak to long tsog.
To Ta she tak bo thing I swear an oath. I push a stone into the earth.
bu tsum bu yak to nŏn
I plant a beautifully decorated bamboo in the earth. (This ceremony takes place at the swearing and oath taking, so that the oath is sworn over the stone and the bamboo, which are placed side by side.)
sog dŏm riak to sŏn tŏn do ga
Here in this place I take the oath. In our own interest I do it.
sa rong sa ni riak are to nŏn sog dŏm ga
Just today I take the oath here. Thus here in this place
mung sa lom chat are tak bo she thing sa
the demons' ways are barred. Now through Tak bo she things' wonder-
a dyăn sa lŏm nŏng to Along ren me sŭ lŏm
powers, I bring this sacrifice. From now on, a bodily substitute, a
sa lŏ lŏm bo son areka gi dŏk ma bin
compensation we give. Send no more suffering to this person."

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The ceremonies are the same as those described above. Each Bong-thing has his own texts. The general scheme is, however, the same. Emphasis is always laid on the claim that they are based on the old traditions. The following text proves this in a particular manner :

"The genesis of Chi, the genesis of the intoxicating drink Dyō. This arose from an old tradition. The place of origin is where the Sang li and Sang log trees originated. In the interest of the whole world and for our use, O messenger of God, come hither. Tak bo thing, the wonder-power-god, came down for the creation of the world. Now again come down for the creation of the world. Like the tradition of the Rong, the tradition of the sons of Bong-thing came in place of the Bamboo books. It is the custom of the ten Rong sons to make a synopsis of the tradition of the creation of the earth, of the water, and of the whole world.[62] The world of the

62. "Fiang it dyō it
Chi's genesis, Dyō's intoxication genesis ! (fiang is millet beer, and is looked on as female ; dyō is an intoxicating drink, made from a substance different than millet, and is looked on as a male).

lung tān o ba nang plō — sang li sang log cho sa lyang ga plō
This arose from an old tradition. — The place of origin is where the Sang li Sang log pair of trees originated ! (Several holy trees are known. Na-sō and Na-ling were already mentioned. Two others are called Mong-chial and Sō-brio. They make three bundles of branches from these trees. One is planted in front of the altag, The Mun or Bong-thing holds the two others in his hands when he wishes to prophesy. These holy trees are expressly created and handed to men by God for ritual purposes. This is an analogy of the tree of the world).

sōg dōm tam ga — son sa dān dog ga rum fig rum plō
In the interest of the whole world and for our use, messenger of God come here! (fig rum is the messenger or servant of God).

Tak bo thing sa a dyān rum — lyang it ga da mu
Tak bo thing, wonder-power-god, came down for the creation of the world.

lyang it ga da — rong sa lung tān
For the creation of the world come down here. — As the Rong tradition, the

bong thing hob sa po mik po thong chio — sa lung tān plō
Bong-thing sons' tradition, came in place of the bamboo books. The synopsis

lyang it — usg it — yang ming yang song !
of the tradition of the creation of the earth, of the creation of water, of the creation of the whole world

782 776 [773] demons also exists here. The Mung give, in truth, a loving and adequate blessing to all. According to the origin of the tradition of our ancestors, our grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren must perfectly act. Then only shall we be blessed. If we fail to act in this manner [688] it will bring us no good. The Dar gods will destroy the heart. But if we act in the manner prescribed, our ancient forbears, gods of destiny—the Darmit—will prepare an abundance of good things. If we do not know how to act in the right manner, the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum, will always be angry at heart. If the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum, is pleased always, the heart will always find joy. The Primeval God, the God of abundance, will himself give us the joy. The god, Fat dzag yō sa fi, will be pleased always. If all of us, creatures, perform the adoration through sacrifice, we shall obtain the rich rewards of the sacrifice. If the God of heaven, the God of abundance, is honoured by sacrifice we shall be given a house.[62a]

[539] 62a. to pong sa lung tăn rong kŏb ga ti sa tim bam mung sa sog
is the custom of the ten Rong sons. The world of the demons
dŏm are ga bam mung ka tŏn sŏ pe tyo
also exists here. The Mung give, in truth, loving and
gŏn ga tag gŏng sa mŏn lam ma tong dŏ do abu amu sa lung tăn plo
adequate blessing to all. As our ancestors' tradition
nong sa ga yu sŏn nin kŏb song ni tŏnŏn sug lang bam sŏ lang bam
originated thus, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren
must act accordingly, and indeed perfectly act.
go yu chin lob top chio. sug ma gŏn na log non
Then shall we receive blessings. If we do not act so it will be bad.
rum dar pong la sŏm du chegu yu sug lang bam dŏ do niu thing sa yo
The Dar gods will kill the heart. If we act so, our ancient ancestors'
king tsum darmit rum pong la ayot ni chio go yu sug ma
gods of destiny, the Darmit, will prepare abundance. If we do not
gŏn gong na da lyang sa kyu rum
know how to act accordingly the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum,
na la sŭm kio cho da lyang sa kyu rum
will always have an angry heart. If the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum,
na la go gong sum riu cho ayot rum
is always pleased, the heart will be happy. The God of abundance,
pum rum hō do nŏm chio. fat dzag yō sa fi rum na la go kio
the Primeval God himself will give it. Fat dzag yō sa fi god will always be pleased.
go yu sog dŏm ga son min nŏng fat yu gong na
If we all in this world, if we creatures perform the adoration through sacrifice,
fat sa ayot top chio
then shall we obtain the riches of the sacrifice.
Chiŏ rum ayot ayit rum fat yu gong
If the God of heaven, the God of abundance, is honoured through sacrifice
li top chio dŏ do nio nyu sug gang
then shall we obtain a house. If we accomplish much work in our fields

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If we accomplish a great amount of work in our fields we shall obtain an abundance of things. Darmit (god) will always grant us a happy destiny. If the lines in our foot and palms are worn out through much work, we shall obtain an abundance of things. If you do not understand how to work, you will not obtain the fruits of blessing. We honour Dar by an adoration of God. I shall perform this work until I sweat blood. Thus I work. A handful, a finger-tip-ful of the sacrifice is offered to the gods of procreation in the other life. Take it, O God, as many sacrifices. These are the fruits of the earth. All people together offer rice. When we sacrifice, many should do it together. That is the right way. God will then be at peace. But if we do not do it, then the gods of procreation will be displeased with us. We, living this life, must eat and work. If we do not work, God will not love us. The Primeval God himself says that we should go at the right time.[82b]

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82b. ayot top chio — dō do king tzum darmit na la go chio
we shall obtain abundance. — A good fate, Darmit god will always grant us.

dyang dzum — gō dzum — sāi dyet sug gan za — ayot top chio
If our foot and hand-lines are all worn out through much works, we shall obtain abundance.

sug ma gōn na mong — gong nō chiu
If you do not understand how to work you will not obtain

lep apot ma top na — rum za chiong — dar sō chiong
the fruits of blessings. — As adoration of God we honour Dar.

siot sug vi oi flet nōng ga — sug bō nang yug sug
I will do this work till I sweat blood. — Thus I work.

mō tsō a ping ga — ayek rum ga — go ri go chion dza
In the other life to the gods of procreation, a handful, a fingertipful

apōt — rum ga blad nom pō tat chio
of the sacrifice is offered. — God, take it as many sacrifices.

apot sog dam are ga bam — mang sa min de pō nōng
The fruits of this earth are of this kind. — All people together offer rice.

sa hō tōng sa sug lang adyap — do sug gad gang na
When we sacrifice, then many should do it together. — Then is it right.

rum na la — ago ni chio — sug ma gōn na
For God it will then be peace. — If we do not do it, then will the

ayek alat rum na la ga yum hium non ne. — tsō are ga bam ba sug la yo sam
gods of procreation be displeased with us. — We, living in this life,

la yong gad chio — sug la ma yu na — gang la rum na la
must work and eat. — If we do not work, then God will

a go ma mad ni rum pum thing hō do sa dōn ga — lōd nan chiong ta tsāi djō
never love us. — The Primeval God himself says that we should go at the right time.

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776 But we fail to understand it. We are naked at the time of our birth. Now too we are naked. When time will
[761] cease for us, the time of our death, it is impossible to say. We cannot give any news of the land of the gods. And at the time God calls us, mother and father cannot call us back. When the day of death is at hand, neither elder brothers, sisters, children nor daughters-in-law can call us back. When the day of the Lord dawns, then indeed has death passed away."[62c] The sacrificial texts quoted give us an idea of their vast varieties.

(*i*) Other Sacrifices

796 Although the Mun and the Bong-thing wield such a great
782 influence over and dominate the whole sacrificial organisation, there are all the same, some sacrifices which do not come within their sphere.

An old Lepcha said to us, "For our original sacrifice we, the Rong folk, offer the intoxicating drink Chi, in a wooden vessel together with rice and small dried birds on a banana leaf-plate. The Chi had to be prepared by a young girl who
[784] was still a virgin. The little birds had to be shot by a young lad who had had no sexual relations with anyone. The

[539] 62c go yu ma dyak ne djek go rung a gün do
But we do not understand it. At the time of our birth we are naked,

djek lo tang ka tsäd ga la a gün lo tang gäm
at present time we are also naked. When our time is over

amäx sa sut de dön ma gön
to tell the time of our death, that is not possible.

rum lyang sa sut ma gön
To give news of the land of the gods is not possible.

rum nöng lo lek dö tsäd ga abu amu lin ma gön chiang chia
At the time when God calls us, father and mother cannot call us.

pe plö lad chiang gam anam anom ahöb asen
When the day of death is coming, elder brothers, elder sisters, children and

nyom li ma top nag ni rum sa nag ni tag nam che lat nan
daughter-in-law can no longer call us. When the day of God is coming, then is death passing away."